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LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

By SAMUEL T. PICKARD

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II

LIFE AND LETTERS OF
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

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VOLUME II

CAMBRIDGE
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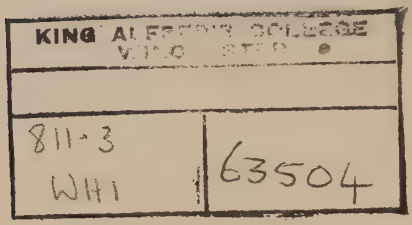

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LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CHAPTER IX.

"THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY."

1857–1860.

In 1857, it had happened that nearly all the eminent writers of the North, and particularly in Massachusetts, had come out on the side of freedom, while the lawyers and clergymen, the merchants and politicians, were as a class either silent upon the subject, or actively in opposition to the Liberty party. The leading magazines and newspapers were not hospitable to free thought and expression on the theme that was uppermost in the public mind. Editors and publishers of periodicals having a general circulation were shy of writers who, like Whittier, Lowell, Sumner, Mrs. Stowe, and Emerson, were determined to speak plainly upon a subject that was tabooed in society. The other leading writers of New England in these days had, most of them, sources of income outside of their literary work. But Whittier, no longer acting as a paid secretary of an anti-slavery

society, and not accepting calls to the lecture platform, had no resource but his small salary as corresponding editor of the "National Era," the occasional sale of a poem to some other periodical, and the royalty on his books, which at that time did not amount to much. His mother, his sister, and himself were frequently ill, and therefore it is not to be wondered at that about this time his finances were at the lowest ebb, and there was a prospect that he might be obliged to mortgage his homestead. In this emergency, his friend, Joseph Sturge, of England, came to his relief, through the instrumentality of the large-hearted New York merchant, Lewis Tappan. Whittier was reluctant to accept help, but grateful to those who stood by him in his need. The "Atlantic Monthly," which was started in 1857, was of material assistance to him in this strait, as it paid him better for his work than any other periodical had done. The better sale of his books was also bringing gradual relief, but it was not until the publication of "Snow-Bound," in 1866 that the straitened condition referred to was permanently relieved.

It occurred to Mr. Francis H. Underwood to combine the powers of the eminent liberty-loving writers of the North in a magazine which by its ability should command a hearing in circles in which hitherto the word "slavery" was not to be spoken above the breath. He was successful in securing the coöperation he wished, and at a dinner given by Mr. Phillips, the publisher, in the summer of 1857, there were present Longfellow,

Emerson, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes, Motley, Edmund Quincy, and other writers of high reputation. The plans for the new magazine were discussed and arranged at this dinner. Mr. Underwood nominated Lowell as editor-in-chief, and his name was received with enthusiasm. Holmes suggested the name "The Atlantic Monthly." The success of the enterprise was assured from the start, and a new era in American literature was inaugurated.

Mr. Whittier now found a field for his literary activity close at home, in a magazine which promised to be hospitable to ideas of reform, although not pledged to any party. The hearty coöperation had been secured not only of well-known abolitionists like Whittier, Theodore Parker, Mrs. Stowe, and Lowell, but of the more purely literary coterie of poets, novelists, essayists, and historians, like Longfellow, Holmes, Emerson, Motley, Prescott, Whipple, and Trowbridge. These writers, working harmoniously together, gave a new impulse to American literature. There was a freedom in the discussion of moral and political questions such as had not previously been ventured upon in literary periodicals. Underwood says: —

"The 'Atlantic' was mainly devoted to belles-lettres, and was intended, first of all, to be entertaining; but every number contained a political article by Parke Godwin or Lowell, and the public understood and felt that this was the point of the plowshare that was to break up the old fields. A plethora of discussion, of invective, or of passionate appeal, such as had been employed in the anti-slavery journals, would have swamped the

magazine, or destroyed its influence with the classes to be reached. All the contributors, including the old abolitionists, were content to leave questions of politics to the editor. Whittier's poems for the first three years were upon general subjects, with the single exception of 'Le Marais du Cygne,' written upon a massacre by pro-slavery ruffians in Kansas."

The poem he contributed to the first number of the new magazine was "The Gift of Tritemius." This was followed by "Skipper Ireson's Ride," "The Old Burying-Ground," "Telling the Bees," "The Swan Song of Parson Avery," and other legends and ballads now reckoned among the classics of our literature. James Russell Lowell was the first editor, and F. H. Underwood his assistant. To them he sent, soon after the publication of the first number, the copy of "Skipper Ireson's Ride," with the following note to Mr. Lowell: —

"The first number is excellent. I send for December (I hope in season) a bit of a Yankee ballad, the spirit of which pleases me more than the execution. Will it do? Look at it, and use the freedom of an old friend towards it and its author. The incident occurred sometime in the last century. The refrain is the actual song of the women on this march. To relish it, one must understand the peculiar tone and dialect of the ancient Marbleheaders."

Mr. Lowell consulted with his assistant, and both of them wrote to Mr. Whittier suggesting the use of dialect in the burthen. Mr. Lowell's letter, dated Cambridge, November 4, 1857, is as follows:

"I thank you heartily for the ballad, which will go into the next number. I like it all the better for its provincialism — in all fine pears, you know, we can taste the old *pucker*. I know the story well. I am familiar with Marblehead and its dialect, and as the burthen is intentionally provincial I have taken the liberty to print it in such a way as shall give the peculiar accent, thus: —

> "'Cap'n Ireson for his horrd horrt
> Was torred and feathered and corried in a corrt.'

That 's the way I 've always 'horrd it' — only it began, 'Old Flud Ireson.' What a good name Ireson (son of wrath) is for the hero of such a history!

"You see that 'Tritemius' is going the rounds. I meant to have sent you the proofs, and to have asked you to make a change in it where these four rhymes come together (assonances, I mean) — 'door,' 'poor,' 'store,' 'more.' It annoyed me, but I do not find that any one else has been troubled by it, and everybody likes the poem. I am glad that the Philistines have chosen some verses of mine[1] for their target, not being able to comprehend the bearing of them. I mean I am glad that they did it rather than pick out those of any one else for their scapegoat. I shall not let you rest till I have got a New England pastoral out of you. This last is cater-cousin to it, at least, being a piscatorial. . . . The sale of Mags. has been very good considering the times, and I think you will find the second number better than the first.

[1] Mr. Lowell refers to "The Origin of Didactic Poetry," which was his first poem in the *Atlantic*.

"If you do not wish the burthen so spelt will you write me?"

To this Mr. Whittier replied: —

"I leave the matter of the burthen of my ditty to thy better judgment. As to the spelling, the substitution of 'corried' for 'rid' does not suit me so well, but I am not particularly strenuous about it. Would it not be well to put it in italics, and with quotation marks, thus: '*Here 's Cap'n Ireson*,' etc. Instead of '*was* tarred and feathered' it should read as I have it, 'Tarred and feathered,' and the provincial spelling should only be used when the women are represented as singing, 'Here 's Cap'n Ireson,' etc. Where *I* repeat it, the odd spelling and the quotation marks should be omitted. At least, so it strikes me. I had just sent thee a line, when I received thine. In it I suggest an alteration of a single line. The 'pastoral' shall be thought of. 'The Witch's Daughter' was an attempt of the kind, but not entirely satisfactory. I may possibly do better. I am uncertain what to say as to the money suggestion. All I know is that such an article as 'Cap'n Ireson' would bring me fifty dollars from another source. It is not worth it, perhaps. I shall set no price upon my pieces, but shall leave the matter to the publishers, who can best judge what they are worth. I have suffered in my small way in these hard times, and am beginning to feel that my creditors will not have the Christian grace to forgive my debts. The state of my health — which makes the writing of a letter a painful burthen — renders it necessary that I should receive

the value of what I am able to do. . . . I am glad to hear that the magazine is doing so well, and thanking thee for thy kind suggestions, I am very truly thy friend.

"P. S. Since writing this, have received a line from F. H. Underwood, with the proof. I have, on further consideration, adopted your suggestions as to the refrain, and written him accordingly."

The story of "Skipper Ireson" was told to Mr. Whittier by a schoolmate at the Academy, who came from Marblehead, and he first began to write it out under the Hugh Tallant sycamores in 1828. It was not finished, however, for nearly thirty years. He supposed it was a tradition of the last century, — was not aware that the poor man who was so harshly treated was a contemporary of his own; for the poet was nearly a year old when the Skipper took his ride.[1]

There was much inquiry of Mr. Whittier in regard to the line in "Skipper Ireson's Ride," referring to "one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass." As a specimen of the letters he received, take this

[1] An authentic version of the story of Captain Benjamin Ireson may be found in the *History and Traditions of Marblehead*, by Samuel Roads, Jr. Of this Mr. Whittier said in a letter to Mr. Roads: —

"I have now no doubt that thy version of Skipper Ireson is the correct one. My verse was solely founded on a fragment of rhyme which I heard from one of my early schoolmates, a native of Marblehead. I supposed the story to which it referred dated back at least a century. I knew nothing of the particulars, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy. I am glad, for the sake of truth and justice, that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living."

one from Gail Hamilton, written from Washington, April 4, 1882: —

"What do you mean by 'one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass'? I have always trotted him calmly up and down as the famous horse of brass on which the Tartar king did ride — but when I turn to the Tartar king himself, I do not see any one-eyed Calendar among the Cambuscans bold. I thought I knew all about it, but find I don't. I went up to the Congressional library yesterday, and even Mr. Spofford, who knows everything, knew not this. Master Whittier, rise and explain! I am sure there never was any such person. Thee made it all up."

Whether Mr. Whittier ever answered this question we do not know, but if he had looked up his authorities, he would have been obliged to confess that his memory had proved treacherous in regard to the tale of the one-eyed Calendar in the "Arabian Nights." There were three Calendars, and it was not the one with the horse of brass who had his eye switched out by his horse's tail. The one with the black horse was he whom Whittier had in mind. But, as Gail Hamilton says, in a letter to the editor of this work: "I have no right to quarrel with any kind of a horse he chose to bestride. If not the Arabian's, so much the worse for Arabia!"

After forwarding "Skipper Ireson," and before hearing from it, he sent to Lowell "The Eve of Election," with the following note, dated October 4: "I send thee a night piece, which, if not as good as Parnell's, has at least the merit of present-

ing American ideas, and the philosophy of Christian Democracy. It pleases me, but that is no reason that it should anybody else. If it can have a place in the magazine for December, it is at thy service — if not, please return it. What 's thy decision as to Cap'n Ireson ? "

As " Skipper Ireson " was published in the December number, " The Eve of Election " was necessarily postponed, and it occurred to Mr. Whittier that it had better be sent to a weekly, that it might appear somewhat nearer to the election season for which it was written. He therefore wrote to Lowell, in December, offering to substitute for it another poem, " The Old Burying-Ground." The little piece of his sister's mentioned in his letter was " The Wedding Veil," which was published in the " Atlantic," and may be found in " Whittier's Poetical Works," vol. iv., p. 298 : —

" I am inclined to think that ' The Eve of Election ' is better adapted, if published at all, to the ' National Era ' than to the ' Atlantic.' If thou wilt return it to me I will send in exchange another piece which I like very well, but which for my own sake, as well as that of the magazine, I wish thee and friend Underwood to return to me if it seems to you advisable, regarding it, as you should do, entirely from a critical point of view. This little piece purloined from my sister's writing-desk be good enough to return also, if not likely to be used, as she misses the manuscript, and suspects me of some mischief. I was in Boston a day or two ago, but had not time nor health to visit Cambridge, as I intended. Why don't you get

Frémont to give you a paper on his mountain experiences? His is a graphic pen, and an article from him would do something for the magazine."

Mr. Lowell wrote that "The Eve of Election" would be held back, and Mr. Whittier then forwarded the promised lines about the old burying-ground[1] with this note: —

"I thank thee for holding back my election verses. I send thee herewith a picture of one of the features of our New England scenery — the old 'buryin'-ground.' I hope it will meet thy approval, although it does [not] come up to my conception in all respects. The severe sickness of my mother has prevented my giving any thought to it since it was written. I shall be glad to surprise my sister with her printed verses in the stately 'Atlantic.'"

On the first day of January, 1858, Mr. Whittier sent Fields some suggestions of changes in his burying-ground poem, and announced the death of his mother: "The entire piece has now to me a deep and solemn significance. It was written in part while watching at the sick-bed of my dear mother — now no longer with us. She passed away a few days ago, in the beautiful serenity of a Christian faith — a quiet and peaceful dismissal. The mighty bereavement overwhelms us. May God enable us to bear it, and improve its holy lesson!"

On the 10th of January, 1858, Mr. Sumner sent this note from Boston: —

[1] This poem was written with a thought of the ancient cemetery at East Haverhill, near Rocks Village.

"I constantly think of you and long for the sound of your voice or at least the sight of your most welcome hand-writing. How fares the world with you? And chiefly, how is your health? I have had for some time disability enough to secure a respite for you. But mine, thank God! is passing away — slowly but surely. Meanwhile I am doomed to silence and repose. This is hard — very hard, and at times makes me very unhappy. God bless you! dear Whittier."

This is Whittier's reply, written the next day:

"During the last few weeks I have been watching by the bedside of my dear mother, — following her in love and sympathy to the very entrance of the valley of shadows. She is no longer with us. The end was one of exceeding peace — a quiet and beautiful dismissal. We are stunned by the great bereavement. The world looks far less than it did when she was with us. Half the motive power of life is lost. . . . I meant to have seen thee before the session and visited Boston. My dear mother, then ill, urged me to go, as she wished me to see thee and Colonel Frémont, who was then in the city. . . . Only think of it — Democracy divided against itself — Douglas against Buchanan! Thee can afford to be silent, when the Divine Providence looks, as of old, from clouds of fire, and troubles the tent of the Egyptians and takes off their chariot wheels so that they drive heavily."

The next poem sent to the "Atlantic" was "The Bees of Fernside," afterward entitled "Telling the Bees." It was sent to Lowell in a note

dated February 16, 1858: "I send thee a bit of rhyme which pleases me, and yet I am not quite sure about it. What I call simplicity may be only silliness, and my poor bantling only fit to be handed over to Dr. Howe's school for feeble-minded children. But I like it and hope better things of it. Look it over and let me hear from thee, if but a line."

Six days later he wrote to make some changes. The allusion in the last sentence of the following note is to the fact that he had been recently elected an overseer of Harvard College,[1] in which institution Lowell was a professor. "I wish to hear from thee in regard to the piece — if thou hast any doubts about it, send it back to me, without troubling thyself to explain why or wherefore. I shall be sure it is for good and sufficient reason. But at any rate let me hear from thee in some way. If thee fail to do this, I shall turn thee out of thy professor's chair, by virtue of my new office of overseer."

The place Mr. Whittier had in mind in writing "Telling the Bees" was his birthplace. There were beehives on the garden terrace near the well-sweep, occupied, perhaps, by the descendants of Thomas Whittier's bees. The approach to the house from over the northern shoulder of Job's

[1] In February, 1858, Mr. Whittier was elected by the legislature a member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard College. In 1860 the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred upon him by the college, and in 1866, at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration of the college, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of Brown University in 1869.

Hill by a path that was in constant use in his boyhood, and is still in existence, is accurately described in the poem. The "gap in the old wall" is still to be seen, and "the stepping-stones in the shallow brook" are still in use. His sister's garden was down by the brookside in front of the house, and her daffodils are perpetuated, and may now be found in their season each year in that place. The red-barred gate, the poplars, the cattle-yard with "the white horns tossing over the wall," — these were all part of Whittier's boy life on the old farm. Even the touch of "the sundown's blaze on her window-pane" is realistic. The only place from which the blaze of the setting sun could be seen reflected in the windows of the old mansion was from the path so perfectly described, and no doubt the poet had often noticed the phenomenon in his youth while approaching the house in this direction. All the story that is woven into the ballad about "Mary" and her lover is of course wholly imaginative. The poem was written more than twenty years after Mr. Whittier's removal to Amesbury, and his sister Mary was still living.

On the 20th of January, 1858, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mr. Underwood: "Some days ago I sent my friend Lowell a copy of some lines, 'The Pipes at Lucknow.'[1] I am not certain what his judgment was concerning them. If, however, he submitted them to thee, and there is any probability of their appearance in the 'Monthly,' I would like to make an alteration in the last few lines of the first stanza, and to interpolate one

[1] Afterward recalled, and printed in the *National Era*.

stanza.[1] . . . If friend Lowell, however, thinks the lines not quite up to the subject, or to his estimate of my ability, he is a true man and a true friend, and will act accordingly."

While this ballad was in Lowell's hands, Whittier sent this note, dated April 10, 1858, suggesting a change, which was made; and the new stanza is one of the finest in the poem: —

"After the verse in 'The Pipes at Lucknow,' closing with these lines, —

> "God be praised! The march of Havelock!
> The piping of the clans!

I propose the insertion of these lines: —

> "Nearer, louder, fierce as vengeance,
> Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
> Rose and fell MacGregor's clan-call
> Stinging all the air to life.
> But when the far-off dust-cloud
> To plaided legions grew,
> Full tenderly and blithesomely
> The pipes of rescue blew!

It is in strict accordance with the facts of the rescue. In the distance the beleaguered garrison heard the stern and vengeful slogan of the MacGregors, but when the troops of Havelock came in view of the English flag still floating from the Residency, the pipers struck up the immortal air of Burns, 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot.' Excuse my troubling thee, and believe me very truly thy friend."

Whittier's letters to the editors of the "Atlantic" make frequent comment upon the work of

[1] The stanza to which reference is here made is the one beginning —

> "Like the march of soundless music."

other contributors. To Mr. Underwood he wrote in February, 1858: "Dr. Holmes's 'Autocrat' is thrice excellent; the little poem at its close ["The Chambered Nautilus"] is booked for immortality."

This letter to Mr. Underwood, dated 5th 7th mo., 1858, refers to the change of a stanza in "Le Marais du Cygne":—

"I am heartily obliged to thee for thy kind suggestions. But see what has been the result of them! Is the piece better or worse? Who knows? My sister thinks *she* does, and that I have altered it for the better. I hope it will strike thee and Lowell in the same way. The sweep and rhythm please me; but I have had hard work to keep down my indignation. I feel a good deal more like a wild Berserker than like a carpet minstrel, 'with his singing robes about him,' when recording atrocities like that of Swan's Marsh. I want a proof-sheet of it, as soon as may be, to send to Charles Sumner in advance of its publication. . . . There is not a dull page in the last 'Atlantic.' If it could only be kept up to that point it would take the precedence by right of all magazines on either side of the Atlantic."

Whittier's poem "The Cable Hymn," celebrating the completion of the Atlantic cable, was published in the "Atlantic" of October, 1858. In his manuscript it was called "The Great Wire," and it was sent to Mr. Lowell in August. On the 10th of that month, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mr. Underwood:—

"In my haste yesterday I omitted an idea which

seems to me necessary to my little poem on the 'Great Wire.' After the fifth verse add the following: —

"Through Orient seas, o'er Afric's plain,
And Asian mountains borne,
The vigor of the Northern brain
Shall nerve the world outworn.

"From clime to clime, from shore to shore
Shall thrill the magic thread;
The new Prometheus steals once more
The fire that wakes the dead.

"I take it for granted that the September number of the magazine is stereotyped; but you reserve a few pages to notice recent events, and perhaps my little lyric may serve to close your article on the great event of the age. If so, as I suppose I cannot see the proof, please look to it carefully. The value of a poem like this depends upon its timely publication. At the risk of calling to mind 'Mons. Tonson come again,' I venture to suggest for the verse in my poem closing with the line

"Clasp hands beneath the sea,

the following as more clear and definite: —

"And one in heart as one in blood
Shall all her peoples be:
The hands of human brotherhood
Shall clasp beneath the sea.

"The last number of the magazine is 'excellent well.' Emerson is outdoing himself, and the 'Autocrat' is better and better. The love passage between him and the sweet school-mistress is inimitable. Boston Common is henceforth classic ground."

After Taylor's return from Russia and Norway,

in 1858, he was lecturing in New England, and Whittier wrote him this note, dated Amesbury, 10th 12th mo.: "Can thee not make us a call before leaving New England? We want a lecture from thee, and that old pocket-book, which thee remembers was so ostentatiously displayed at the close of thy lecture some years ago, is good for $40. But lecture, or none, come and see us. Our dear mother can no longer welcome thee, but sister and I shall be glad to see thee. Elizabeth expects the feather-pocket from Lofoden!"

The poem now entitled "The Preacher" was originally called "The Great Awakening," and it was sent to the "Atlantic," as was also "The Red River Voyageur," and recalled for publication in the "National Era" by the following note to Lowell, dated December 29, 1858. The same note inclosed a poem that was soon after published in the "Atlantic": "I send herewith 'The Double-Headed Snake of Newbury.' If it is suited for your meridian, use it. As to the other two pieces, 'The Great Awakening,' and 'The Voyageur on the Red River,' do me the favor to return them by the bearer of this, the expressman between your city and Amesbury. I want them immediately. . . . Mrs. Stowe's story ["The Minister's Wooing"] opens admirably. I wish, however, she would give more local coloring and atmosphere to her picture, so that we may know what part of the world we are in, in what age, as respects costume, etc., and what climate. In other respects the tale is very striking in its promise."

"The Double-Headed Snake of Newbury," here

referred to, appeared in the "Atlantic" of March, 1859. "The Northman's written rock," to which reference is made in this poem, was reported to be on a ledge in what is now the town of Groveland, about one fourth of a mile east of the road from West Newbury to Georgetown. The inscription has not been found of late years, but a sketch of it was made in 1854, and published in the "New England Historical and Genealogical Register," vol. viii. The surface of the rock is now mossy and seamed, and undergoing a process of disintegration. In a note to Mr. Underwood about this poem, Whittier says, "My sister thinks it good; and I defer to her judgment — when it is agreeable to my wishes."

"The Red River Voyageur" was suggested by reading a work on Manitoba, by J. W. Bond, who was the historiographer of the expedition of Governor Ramsey to Pembina in 1851. This passage, referring to the vesper bell of St. Boniface, must have been the kernel from which the poem grew: "As I pass slowly along the lonely road that leads me from thee, Selkirk, mine eyes do turn continually to gaze upon thy smiling, golden fields, and the lofty towers of St. Boniface, now burnished with the rays of the departing sun, while the sweet vesper bell reverberates afar and strikes so mournfully pleasant upon mine ear. I feel satisfied that, though absent thousands of weary miles, my thoughts will always dwell on thee with rapturous emotions." This church was burned in 1860. The bells fell and were broken. Their fragments were collected from the ruins, sent to London and recast

by their original founder, and, recrossing the Atlantic, took their place in the tower of the new cathedral of St. Boniface, where their chimes may be heard to-day, on memorable state occasions, very rarely in honor of American personages or events. They greeted General Sherman in 1880, and in 1882, when the Misses Banning of St. Paul, elocutionists, gave an effective rendering of Whittier's poem, the bells were again rung, in their honor, by order of the archbishop.

A scoffer in a Kansas parish was making use of some of the lines in "The Preacher," whereupon a clergyman in the place wrote to Mr. Whittier for an explanation of his meaning. He received the following note in reply, dated March 9, 1891: "The lines referred to by thy lay anti-church friend had no reference to the present time. They were in a poem called 'The Preacher,' and relate to the condition of New England religion just before the 'Great Awakening' or revival under Edwards and Whitefield one hundred and fifty years ago. . . . I think the church and ministry at the present time are most commendably active in works of love and mercy. Our Christianity is becoming practical, caring for the temporal as well as spiritual welfare of the people. More and more the world is learning that the true plan of salvation is love to God and love to man."

The friend to whom reference is made in the prelude to "The Preacher," as accompanying the author in a walk to the summit of the Whittier hill in Amesbury, which overlooks the chain bridge at Deer Island and the steeples of more distant

Newburyport, was Lucy Larcom. In a letter to Miss Larcom, written in 1860, he says: "The poem on Whitefield was written long ago. I added an introduction to it, in which I attempted to describe the sunset in the Merrimac valley, which we looked on together from Whittier hill."

In 1881, Governor John D. Long, of Massachusetts, incorporated in his Thanksgiving proclamation the poem of Whittier's entitled "Garden." The poem was written to be sung at an agricultural and horticultural fair in Amesbury, in 1858. The next year it was translated into Portuguese by Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, and read at a harvest festival. It has been translated into Italian, and sung by peasants at the gathering of the vintage. In this country it has served at the festivals of many state agricultural societies. Under date November 15, 1881, a fortnight before Thanksgiving Day, a lady friend in Boston wrote to Mr. Whittier: "I was coming through a poor street day before yesterday, and in the window of a wretched little shop I saw the broadside upon which the Thanksgiving proclamation was printed. It was a place where the light never seemed to shine, and I saw two wretched-looking wayfarers peering in and reading 'O Painter of the fruits and flowers.' It was one of the highest joys of achievement to see these people reading a poem, perhaps for the first time in their lives, and getting from it something of that 'unreasoning joy' which is the soul's continual warrant of immortality. I felt grateful, as it were, for your sake, if you will forgive this vicarious satisfaction."

The poem "In Remembrance of Joseph Sturge," as originally published in the "Independent," in 1859, lacked the next to the last stanza, which was sent on a proof-sheet that failed to arrive in season: —

> "The forges glow, the hammers all are ringing;
> Beneath its smoky veil,[1]
> Hard by, the city of his love is swinging
> Its clamorous iron flail."

The biting sarcasm of the poem "From Perugia," written in 1859, shows the intensity of interest felt by Whittier in the contest for liberty in Italy. Indeed, wherever among men of any race or nationality there was a revolt against tyranny, to them the quick sympathy of Whittier went out, and he gave it expression as freely as he spoke for the slaves of America. This poem was first called "Rome, 1859," and it was sent in September to the "Atlantic," then edited by James Russell Lowell; soon afterwards Mr. Whittier wrote to F. H. Underwood, assistant editor, recalling the poem, but accidentally failed to mail the note. The following letter to Lowell, dated Amesbury, 10th 10th mo., 1859, gives some further details of the history of the poem: "Some two weeks ago I sent, as I supposed, the inclosed letter to Mr. Underwood, recalling my poem 'Rome, 1859,' and stating that I thought of publishing it elsewhere. By sheer accident, I have just found the letter, which, written during illness, was not put in the post-office, as I supposed. Some days ago I sent a copy of the poem to the 'Independent,' taking it

[1] The word "veil" in many successive editions of Mr. Whittier's works was misprinted "vale."

for granted that all was right as respected the 'Atlantic,' and I fear it is now too late to prevent its appearance in that paper. I have telegraphed to stop it. If, however, the piece is in type and worked off for the magazine, and the 'Independent' also, can you not append a note to that effect?"

This letter was received in season to prevent the publication of the poem in the "Atlantic," and it appeared in the "Independent," October 27, 1859. As first printed, it was without the first four stanzas of "From Perugia," and began: —

"Off with hats, down with knees, shout your vivas like mad."

As in the case of the "Texas" poems in 1844, Whittier and Lowell were in this instance inspired simultaneously with the same theme, and oddly enough they took almost the same title. Whittier first named his poem "Rome, 1859," and afterwards changed it to "From Perugia"; Lowell called his poem at first "Italy, 1859," and it was published in the "Atlantic," December, 1859, three months after he had in his possession the poem of Whittier's, which was recalled. There can be no doubt he had already written his "Italy, 1859," or he would not have taken a title so nearly like Whittier's upon the same subject. In Lowell's collected works this poem is called "Villa Franca, 1859."

Several poems written by Mr. Whittier in 1859 and 1860 bear witness to his sympathy with the struggles and the triumphs of Garibaldi. He had previously written "The Prisoner of Naples" and "The Dream of Pio Nono." The first stanzas of

the poem "In Remembrance of Joseph Sturge" refer to the death of King Bomba of Naples. Then came the poem "Italy," remarkable for its recognition of the necessity of war in some great crises of history; next, "Naples," wherein a father is comforted for the loss of a loved daughter in Italy, by the consideration that she has found her grave in a land at last consecrated to liberty.

On the 8th of December, 1859, Whittier sent this note to Sumner upon his return to his senatorial duties with improved health, and expressed his feelings in regard to the then fresh Harper's Ferry incident:[1] "How glad I am to hear of thy return with increased health! Earlier welcomes thou hast doubtless had, but none warmer than mine. May God, who has restored thee, give thee strength and wisdom for the crisis which in his Providence seems close at hand. I inclose a scrap from our village paper in which I have expressed my views of the Harper's Ferry outbreak. I am anxious that our Republican members of Congress should meet the matter fairly, and unequivocally condemn *all* filibustering, whether for freedom or slavery. I like Trumbull's motion — Harper's Ferry is the natural result of the slaveholders' forays into Kansas, and both should be considered together. The distinction should be made clear between the natural sympathy with the man and approval of his mad and, as I think, most danger-

[1] In a letter to a friend dated December 2, 1859, he says: "What a sad tragedy to-day in Virginia! I feel deep sympathy for John Brown, but deplore from my heart his rash and insane attempt. It injures the cause he sought to serve."

ous and unjustifiable act. The North is sound on this point — there are few who approve of the raid over the border."

In his note in reply to this, under date of December 12, 1859, Mr. Sumner says: "At last I am well again, with only the natural solicitude as to the effect of work and the constant pressure of affairs on a system which is not yet hardened and annealed. My physician enjoins for the present caution and a gradual resumption of my old activities."

The poem called "The Playmate" when first published, and now "My Playmate," was when written called "Eleanor," as will be seen by the following note to James Russell Lowell, written January 10, 1860. The stanza last quoted in this note does not appear in the poem in the magazine; it was probably eliminated in the proof.

"In transcribing 'Eleanor' yesterday I did not give one verse I would like to add now, following the one concluding thus: —

"The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

Then add: —

"There haply with her jeweled hands
She smooths her silken gown, —
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The verse immediately following I would have read thus: —

"I linger by her native streams,
I haunt her hills of pine,
And wonder if her gold-brown hair
Is thin and gray as mine.

"Pardon the trouble, and let me have a proof of the piece, if it is printed."

On the 3d of February he wrote in regard to the same poem: "From not receiving the proof I presume my little poem will not appear in the next number of the 'Atlantic.' I would like to see the piece in print before it is irrevocably 'worked off.' My sister tells me the last verse but one is not in keeping with the others; that I have marred by it the simplicity of the poem — that the idea is not fully expressed, etc. I think she is right, and would like to put the following in its place: —

"The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago."

Mr. Whittier was not yet quite done with improving this poem. On the 18th of February, he again wrote to Lowell about it. The editor had probably suggested a change of the name of the hills and woods mentioned in the first and last stanzas, and Mr. Whittier selects the musical name of Ramoth: "I have made sad work with the inclosed proof. I have at thy hint dropped the old name, and taken that of another hill, omitting the 'Gilead' which is affixed to it;[1] and to give the thing a local stand-point, I have introduced the neighboring woods of Follymill,[2] famous hereaway for their mayflowers, or ground laurel. I hope

[1] A hill in South Hampton, N. H., only a few miles from Amesbury, used to be called Ramoth-Gilead.

[2] The Follymill woods are frequently referred to in the letters of Mr. Whittier to his friends, usually those written in the season of mayflowers.

it is all the better for the changes. I wish thee to see that the revised proof is all right."

Miss Porter reports a conversation with Lord Tennyson, in 1892, in which he said of Whittier's poem "My Playmate," "It is a perfect poem; in some of his descriptions of scenery and wild flowers, he would rank with Wordsworth."

In a letter to Whittier dated January 27, 1860, Mr. Sumner refers to the suspension of the amenities of social life at Washington, such was the bitterness of sectional feeling. The foreign ministers were obliged to invite their guests by sections. Sumner says: "Society is disturbed; the diplomats cannot give a dinner without studying their lists as a protocol."

Here is Whittier's note of congratulation upon Sumner's speech on the "Barbarism of Slavery": "I have just finished reading *the* speech. It is all I could wish for it. It takes the dreadful question out of the region of party and expediency, and holds it up in the clear sun-blaze of truth and reason — in all its deformity, and with the blackness of the pit clinging about it. In the light of that speech the civilized world will now see American slavery as it is. There is something really awful in its Rhadamanthan severity of justice: but it was needed. It especially rejoices thy personal friends to see in the speech such confirmation of thy complete restoration to health and strength of body and mind. It was the task of a giant. Our cause has sustained great loss in the death of Theodore Parker. How he would have rejoiced over thy portraiture of the Barbarism of Slavery!"

In June, 1860, in response to an earnest invitation from Bayard Taylor to visit him at Cedarcroft Whittier wrote: "I have told Elizabeth so much about thy Marie that she wants to see her exceedingly. I hope almost against hope that we shall be able to visit you in your new home this fall, where we will plant our trees of friendship and enjoy ourselves. I wish I was a better traveler; if I could keep pace with you I would join you at the mountains instead of sending this note. I travel a great deal, however, by proxy. I have had thee in my service for many years, very much to my satisfaction. Dr. Booth has been to Timbuctoo for me, and Burton to Mecca. Atkinson has been doing Siberia for me. I think (if thy Marie does not object) of sending thee off again to find Xanadu and Kubla Khan."

All that Mr. Whittier says of "Cobbler Keezar" in his note upon the poem is that "he was a noted character among the first settlers in the valley of the Merrimac," but we find something more about him in Mirick's "History of Haverhill,"[1] and this additional information was no doubt furnished to that work by Mr. Whittier. On the occasion of the Haverhill massacre of August 29, 1708, we are told, the savages were discovered, in the vicinity of the village, by John Keezar, who was returning from Amesbury. He ran into the village, and by firing his gun alarmed the inhabitants, who were sleeping totally unguarded. It was the fact that Keezar was wont to pitch his tent on Po Hill

[1] Page 179. See also *Whittier's Prose Works*, vol. ii., pp. 375, 376.

and mend the foot-gear of the Amesbury people that suggested to the poet the use of his name as the seer of the wonderful vision revealed by the magic lapstone. When this ballad was sent to Fields for the "Atlantic," in 1860, it was accompanied by the following note: "I send thee an absurd ballad which I like *for* its absurdity. Read it, and let me know whether thee think it worth submitting to Lowell. It is just what 'Harper' would like, but I would like better to see it in the Maga., if it is proper for it. I am greatly obliged to the writer of the notice of my poems in the last 'Atlantic,' — Lowell, I suppose. . . . I have used the Yankee word 'woodsy' instead of 'woody' in the ballad."

With such an editor and such a corps of contributors as the "Atlantic Monthly" was favored with, it could not fail of success. Its readers were sure of seeing in each number the best work of the best writers in America, set forth under the skillful editorship of one already recognized as a prince in the realm of letters. Contributors were stimulated and encouraged by receiving adequate payment for their service. The great principles underlying the contest with the slave power were set forth in its editorial pages with entire freedom from the rancor of partisan politics. When the civil war began, the "Atlantic" placed the flag on its cover, and there it remained until the war ended, — an emblem of its devotion to the cause of the Union.

Whittier's prophetic soul recognized the transcendent importance of the issues involved in the

presidential election of 1860, and his political work that year was as earnest and continuous as we have seen it was when he was writing campaign hymns for Frémont and for free Kansas. His lines in "The Summons," published in the "Atlantic" in the summer of 1860, show the devoted spirit of the man. After publishing this poem, he feared that it had a tone of censure for other literary men who had not appeared to realize the gravity of the situation in which their country was placed, and he made this reference to it in a letter to Lucy Larcom: "I do not quite like the tone of 'The Summons,' now that it is published. It was, however, an expression of a state of mind which thee would regard as pardonable if thee knew all the circumstances. It is *too complaining*, and I hope I shall not be left to do such a thing again."

The campaign song "The Quakers are Out!" was written to be sung at a Republican mass meeting held in Newburyport, October 11, 1860. Much anxiety had been expressed during the summer in regard to Pennsylvania, the vote of which State it was thought would decide the contest. If the Quakers could be aroused, Pennsylvania could be counted upon as safe for Abraham Lincoln, and as the state election occurred several weeks before the presidential, the result of that election would indicate whether Quakerism was thoroughly waked up to the importance of the contest. The state election was satisfactory to the Republicans, and jubilant mass meetings celebrated the event throughout the North. Mr. Whittier's relief from intense anxiety is shown in these verses predicting

the election of Lincoln in November. They were printed on a leaflet, headed "A Voice from John G. Whittier:" —

THE QUAKERS ARE OUT.

Not vainly we waited and counted the hours,
The buds of our hope have all burst into flowers.
No room for misgiving — no loop-hole of doubt, —
We 've heard from the Keystone! The Quakers are out.

The plot has exploded — we 've found out the trick;
The bribe goes a-begging; the fusion won't stick.
When the Wide-awake lanterns are shining about,
The rogues stay at home, and the true men are out!

The good State has broken the cords for her spun;
Her oil-springs and water won't fuse into one;
The Dutchman has seasoned with Freedom his krout,
And slow, late, but certain, the Quakers are out!

Give the flags to the winds! set the hills all aflame!
Make way for the man with the Patriarch's name!
Away with misgiving — away with all doubt,
For Lincoln goes in when the Quakers are out!

The news of Lincoln's election in November, 1860, was received by Mr. Whittier with devout thankfulness. He wrote to Lucy Larcom: "I agree with thee that 'hallelujah' is better than 'hurra!'"

During the winter the air was full of propositions offered by patriotic citizens with a view of propitiating the slave States, and preventing their threatened secession. Seward made two speeches of this nature, to which Sumner refers in a letter to Whittier, dated February 5, 1861: "I deplore Seward's speeches. The first he read to me, and I supplicated him not to make it. The true-hearted

here have been filled with grief and mortification. People are anxious to save our forts, to save our national capital; but I am more anxious far *to save our principles*, which leaders now propose to abandon, as Mr. Buchanan proposed to abandon Fort Sumter. The public pride arrested the latter; I hope the public conscience may arrest the former. My old saying is revived in my mind. *Backbone*, — this especially is needed here. If we are saved, it will be by events, and not by man. The inordinate demands of the slave States will make it next to impossible to appease them; even compromise cannot go so far. If they asked less we should be lost. Pray keep Massachusetts firm and strong. She must not touch a word of her personal liberty laws. The slightest act of surrender by her would be a signal for the abasement of the free States."

The following letter of Whittier's shows by its date that it was written while Sumner's was on its way to him. It is dated February 6, 1861: "If I recollect rightly, in a speech of thine some time ago, thee suggested the plan of compensation on the part of the general government for the emancipation of slaves in any State that might undertake to throw off the burden and curse of slavery. Am I right in the matter? Would it not be well, while calmly and firmly maintaining on our part the principles of freedom, to renew the offer, as a pledge and proof of our willingness to make great sacrifices in behalf of those of the slave States which are disposed to rid themselves of the dangers and guilt of slavery? It may be that the

offer would be rejected by all, but the moral effect of it would not be lost. It would show the slaveholders that we do not hate them, but slavery only. . . . For the sake of the *truly* Union men of the Border States, I would do anything short of abandonment of principles to extricate them from their unhappy position. They need our kindest regards and sympathy. I inclose a scrap from the 'Portland Transcript,' an extract from one of my brother Matthew F. Whittier's 'Ethan Spike' letters, which is a clever take-off and caricature of Southern secession."

In a letter written a few days earlier he expressed a willingness to pay for runaway slaves rather than catch them: "As to slave-rendition, the great body of our people can no more hunt slaves than commit cannibalism. We simply can't catch runaways; we may as well be honest and say so. But we are ready to pay for them, and that ought to satisfy anybody outside of South Carolina. . . . Tell our friend Wilson that if he speaks in defense of Massachusetts to make no apologies for us. What the old State has done is right. She has been loyal and kept her faith under severest provocation. As to John Brownism, a few individuals cannot make her responsible for their folly. Our good Governor Andrew made a blunder in the speech at the meeting, which, if he is not sorry for, thousands of his best friends are. He was elected governor not on account of that speech, but *in spite of it*, — on account of his great and deserved popularity, and the universal conviction of his integrity."

Mr. Whittier's sonnet "To William H. Seward" was written immediately after his speech in the Senate which was supposed to outline the policy of the incoming administration. This speech had not given entire satisfaction to the more radical wing of the anti-slavery party, and yet it was felt that it was as much as could properly be expected, considering all the difficulties of the situation. The poem was originally published in William Cullen Bryant's paper, the "New York Evening Post," early in February, 1861.

On the 1st of February, Mr. Whittier wrote to W. S. Thayer, Washington correspondent of the "New York Evening Post" (a son of his old friend, A. W. Thayer): "Tell Mr. Seward I have bound him to good behavior in my verse — and that if he yields the ground upon which the election was carried and consents to the further extension of slavery he will 'compromise' *me* as well as the country and himself. God give him strength and wisdom and moderation and firmness! If I were a 'righteous man' my prayers would be 'effectual' for him; at any rate they are 'fervent.' The South by their madness are assuming all the *responsibility* of whatever painful duty may be imposed upon the government. It may be the will of God that slavery shall perish through their folly and crime. If so, all the people will say Amen! I do not see any good to result from the 4th of February conclave. Ere that time, there is likely to be open war on the Gulf, and the whole matter put beyond the reach of committees and commissioners."

In response to an invitation to attend a mass meeting in Boston, in February, 1861, held to consider the political situation, Mr. Whittier wrote to F. H. Underwood: "My lines addressed to Governor Seward were intended to be *admonitory* as well as *commendatory*. I hoped to give him such a kindly hint that he could take it and profit by it, without offense or pride of opinion interfering to counteract it. But I begin to have serious fears that the new administration is entering, like its predecessors, in the downward path of 'compromise.' For myself, I would like to maintain the Union if it could be *the* Union of our fathers. But if it is to be in name only; if the sacrifices and concessions upon which it lives must all be made by the Free States to the Slave; if the peaceful victories of the ballot-box are to be turned into defeats by threats of secession; if rebellion and treason are to be encouraged into a standing menace, a power above law and Constitution, demanding perpetual sacrifice, I, for one, shall not lift a hand against its dissolution. As to fighting, in any event, to *force back* the seceders, I see no sense in it. Let them go on with their mad experiment, the government simply holding its own, and enforcing its revenue laws, until this whole matter can be fairly submitted to the people for their final adjudication. I have great doubts of the wisdom of sending commissioners to Washington, but I am well satisfied with the selection in our State."

This note to Lydia Maria Child was written on the 1st of April, 1861, and gives free expression to

his disgust at the efforts of certain clergymen and politicians to make more compromises to save the Union: "A thousand thanks for giving us that wonderful book 'Linda.' We have read it with the deepest interest. It ought to be circulated broadcast over the land. I laid it down with a deeper abhorrence than ever of the Fugitive Slave Law. Has thee seen Dr. Adams's new book? It is the foulest blasphemy ever put in type — but weak as it is wicked. Get it; it is a curiosity of devilish theology worth studying. — What is to be the end of this disunion turmoil? I cannot but hope that, in spite of the efforts of politicians and compromises, the Great Nuisance is to fall off from us; and we are to be a free people."

Mrs. Child relates this anecdote of Mr. Whittier, who with his sister paid her a visit in 1860: "Whittier complained of time wasted and strength exhausted by people who came to see him out of mere curiosity, or to put up with him to save a penny. His sister described some of these irruptions amusingly in her slow, Quakerly fashion. 'Thee has no idea,' she said, 'how much time Greenleaf spends trying to lose these people in the streets. Sometimes he comes home and says, "Well, sister, I had hard work to lose him, but I have lost him."' 'But I can never lose a *her*,' said Whittier; 'the women are more pertinacious than the men; don't thee find them so, Maria?' I told him I did. 'How does thee manage to get time to do anything?' said he. I told him I took care to live away from the railroad and kept a bulldog and a pitchfork, and I advised him to do the same."

Mrs. Child was no Quaker, but she had the spirit of one in her independence of the fashions in dress. Her bonnets were notably antique in style. On one occasion she called on Mr. Whittier at the house of a common friend in Boston. After her departure, he sat musing, and then soliloquized, "It must be so; I cannot be mistaken!" "What must be so?" queried his hostess. He continued, "Yes, I know I must be right — certainly I have made no mistake!" At length he exclaimed with a triumphant air, "Our friend, Mrs. Child, has a new bonnet!" The incident is characteristic; for Mr. Whittier was always observant of dress, and was in the habit of commenting upon it among his friends.

CHAPTER X.

IN WAR TIME.

1861–1865.

When the dreadful arbitrament of war could not be avoided, distressing as it must have been to one the habit of whose life was that of peaceful philanthropy, Whittier could not retire from the field, but gave frequent expression of his views in prose and verse. If he had written nothing else, his poems "In War Time" would make for him an imperishable monument. In his maturer years war had no such charm for his imagination as that to which he confessed in his earlier years, when he was conscious of a spirit "warring in his members" against the peaceful thoughts and ways of the Society of Friends, exciting in his blood a certain "joy of battle." He has given expression to the feeling in "The Training," included in his "Prose Works." [1]

The warlike tone of some of Mr. Whittier's earlier poems, such as that written on the occasion of the death of Bolivar, serves to show what lyrics might have been expected from his maturer years, had not his Quaker scruples in regard to war restrained his pen, and rendered even his intense love of freedom subservient to what he regarded as the

[1] Vol. i. pp. 346, 347.

Christian rule of life and practice. The only considerations that reconciled him to the civil war were its inevitability, and a trust, which was never shaken, that an omniscient mind took note of all its details and an all-powerful hand would control its results. In his poem "Italy," he has given expression to this confidence: —

"God reigns, and let the earth rejoice!
I bow before his sterner plan.
Dumb are the organs of my choice;
He speaks in battle's stormy voice,
His praise is in the wrath of man!

"Yet, surely as He lives, the day
Of peace He promised shall be ours,
To fold the flags of war, and lay
Its sword and spear to rust away,
And sow its ghastly fields with flowers!"

The consciences of the older members of the Society of Friends were sorely troubled when they found themselves in the midst of a war which they were powerless to avert, and the objects of which had so enlisted the sympathies and patriotic impulses of their sons that many of them were enlisting in the military service of the country. In this emergency it was felt that while they must bear testimony as a Society against war, yet they had duties as citizens to perform in behalf of their country, and in mitigation of the inevitable evils of the conflict. In June, 1861, Mr. Whittier was moved to issue a circular letter addressed "To Members of the Society of Friends," containing suggestions as to ways in which the philanthropy of the sect might properly find expression. In this circular, which was dated Amesbury, 18th 6th mo., 1861, he said, among other things: —

"We have no right to ask or expect an exemption from the chastisement which the Divine Providence is inflicting upon the nation. Steadily and faithfully maintaining our testimony against war, we owe it to the cause of truth, to show that exalted heroism and generous self-sacrifice are not incompatible with our pacific principles. Our mission is, at this time, to mitigate the sufferings of our countrymen, to visit and aid the sick and the wounded, to relieve the necessities of the widow and the orphan, and to practice economy for the sake of charity. Let the Quaker bonnet be seen by the side of the black hood of the Catholic Sister of Charity in the hospital ward. Let the same heroic devotion to duty which our brethren in Great Britain manifested in the Irish famine and pestilence be reproduced on this side of the water, in mitigating the horrors of war and its attendant calamities. What hinders us from holding up the hands of Dorothea Dix in her holy work of mercy at Washington? Our society is rich, and of those to whom much is given much will be required in this hour of proving and trial."

Throughout the war Mr. Whittier's pen was constantly urging that slavery was at the bottom of the trouble, and that there could be no durable peace until it was extirpated. He had a large correspondence with public men in this country and in England, and did not fail to urge this view of the case, at every opportunity. Before the first acts of war, his thought was to let the seceding States go in peace. In "A Word for the Hour," written in January, 1861, he said: —

"They break the links of Union: shall we light
The fires of hell to weld anew the chain
On that red anvil where each blow is pain?"

The poems written during the war appeared in the "Atlantic" and in the "New York Independent;" when he wished to reach the public ear promptly, and could not wait for the slower monthly, his poems were sent to the weekly paper, and they were at once copied over the whole North, giving such tone to public sentiment as no other series of poems had done in America. Even the poems that treated of peaceful themes had all of them the touch which shows they were written in the midst of war's alarms. The condition of his country is always present in his thought. Thus, the sweet poem "Amy Wentworth" is inscribed to William Bradford, the artist, in lines full of excuse for striking "milder keys" to "relieve the storm-stunned ear:" —

"I have not touched with warmer tints in vain,
If in this dark, sad year, it steals one thought from pain."

And in the inscription of "The Countess" to his old friend, Dr. Weld, he says: —

"To-day, when truth and falsehood speak their words
Through hot-lipped cannon and the teeth of swords,
Listening with quickened heart and ear intent
To each sharp clause of that stern argument,
I still can hear at times a softer note
Of the old pastoral music round me float,
While through the hot gleam of our civil strife
Looms the green mirage of a simpler life."

In "Mountain Pictures" and "Our River" are similar reminders that they were written when the war storm was shaking the solid hills, and that —

"Young eyes that last year smiled in ours
Now point the rifle barrel."

James T. Fields edited the "Atlantic Monthly" from 1862 to 1870, and all of Whittier's correspondence with that periodical, as well as the business connected with the publication of his books, was had with him during these important years, and their relations were without any intermission of friendliness and confidence so long as Fields lived. Whittier submitted his manuscripts to the criticism of his friend, and in many cases, as will be seen in the letters given in these volumes, made considerable changes in poems at his suggestion. His business letters to Fields all have friendly touches and references to political events, which indicate how closely they were in sympathy at many points, and how much Whittier enjoyed the comradeship of his publisher.

On the 20th of December, 1861, he returned to Fields a proof-sheet of his poem "Mountain Pictures," one passage of which originally read as follows: —

"Last night's thunder-gust
Roared not in vain: for where its lightnings thrust
Their tongues of fire, the great peaks seem so near,
Lapped clear of mist," etc.

Mr. Fields had evidently criticised the bold play of this imagery, and Whittier makes response: "See what it is to trust an author with his own proofs! I defer to thy judgment. I shrink from the feline suggestiveness of my figure of speech. The tongues of fire shall *burn* up the mist, and not *lap* it. For the rest, I hope the poem is none the

worse for the changes I have thought it best to make. How would it do to strike out these lines:

> "Tangling the dusky woods with silver gleams;
> And far below the dry lips of the streams
> Sing to the freshened meadow-lands again;

and substitute these: —

> "Making the dusk and silence of the woods
> Glad with the laughter of the chasing floods,
> And luminous with blown spray and silver gleams;
> While, in the vales below, the dry-lipped streams
> Sing to the freshened meadow-lands again.

"Our government needs more wisdom than it has thus far had credit for to sustain the national honor and avert a war with England. What a pity that Welles indorsed the act of Wilkes in his report. Why could n't we have been satisfied with the thing without making such a cackling over it? Apologies are cheap, and we could afford to make a very handsome one in this case. A war with England would ruin us. It is too monstrous to think of. May God in his mercy save us from it!"

In the "Atlantic" for December, 1861, there appeared one of Whittier's most characteristic poems, "A Legend of the Lake"; but the ballad was never included by the poet in any of the volumes made up from his contributions to the "Atlantic." The reason for the omission was this: A relative of the young man who was the hero of the ballad wrote to the poet seriously objecting to his telling the story, which was a true one; in the kindness of his heart he decided to suppress the poem, but in 1888 he was urged by his publishers and by

many friends to include it in the edition to be published that year. He gave his consent on condition that if any relative was living who still objected, it was to be omitted. There was a relative living who objected. As there can now be no good reason for suppressing the ballad, it is here given: —

A LEGEND OF THE LAKE.

Should you go to Centre Harbor,
As haply you some time may,
Sailing up the Winnepesaukee
From the hills of Alton Bay, —

Into the heart of the highlands,
Into the north wind free,
Through the rising and vanishing islands,
Over the mountain sea, —

To the little hamlet lying
White in its mountain fold,
Asleep by the lake and dreaming
A dream that is never told, —

And in the Red Hill's shadow
Your pilgrim home you make,
Where the chambers open to sunrise,
The mountains, and the lake, —

If the pleasant picture wearies,
As the fairest sometimes will,
And the weight of the hills lies on you,
And the water is all too still, —

If in vain the peaks of Gunstock
Redden with sunrise fire,
And the sky and the purple mountains
And the sunset islands tire, —

If you turn from in-door thrumming
And the clatter of bowls without,
And the folly that goes on its travels
Bearing the city about, —

And the cares you left behind you
Come hunting along your track,
As Blue-Cap in German fable
Rode on the traveler's pack, —

Let me tell you a tender story
Of one who is now no more,
A tale to haunt like a spirit
The Winnepesaukee shore, —

Of one who was brave and gentle,
And strong for manly strife,
Riding with cheering and music
Into the tourney of life.

Faltering and failing midway
In the Tempter's subtle snare,
The chains of an evil habit
He bowed himself to bear.

Over his fresh young manhood
The bestial veil was flung, —
The curse of the wine of Circe,
The spell her weavers sung.

Yearly did hill and lakeside
Their summer idyls frame;
Alone in his darkened dwelling
He hid his face for shame.

The music of life's great marches
Sounded for him in vain;
The voices of human duty
Smote on his ear like pain.

In vain over island and water
The curtains of sunset swung;
In vain on the beautiful mountains
The pictures of God were hung.

The wretched years crept onward,
Each sadder than the last;
All the bloom of life fell from him,
All the freshness and greenness passed.

But deep in his heart forever
And unprofaned he kept
The love of his saintly mother,
Who in the graveyard slept.

His house had no pleasant pictures;
Its comfortless walls were bare:
But the riches of earth and ocean
Could not purchase his mother's chair.

The old chair, quaintly carven,
With oaken arms outspread,
Whereby, in the long gone twilights,
His childish prayers were said.

For thence in his long night watches,
By moon or starlight dim,
A face full of love and pity
And tenderness looked on him.

And oft, as the grieving presence
Sat in his mother's chair,
The groan of his self-upbraiding
Grew into wordless prayer.

At last, in the moonless midnight,
The summoning angel came,
Severe in his pity, touching
The house with fingers of flame.

The red light flashed from its windows
And flared from its sinking roof;
And baffled and awed before it
The villagers stood aloof.

They shrank from the falling rafters,
They turned from the furnace glare;
But its tenant cried, "God help me!
I must save my mother's chair."

Under the blazing portal,
Over the floor of fire,
He seemed, in the terrible splendor,
A martyr on his pyre.

In his face the mad flames smote him,
And stung him on either side;
But he clung to the sacred relic, —
By his mother's chair he died!

O mother, with human yearnings!
O saint, by the altar stairs!
Shall not the dear God give thee
The child of thy many prayers?

O Christ! by whom the loving,
Though erring, are forgiven,
Hast thou for him no refuge,
No quiet place in heaven?

Give palms to thy strong martyrs,
And crown thy saints with gold,
But let the mother welcome
Her lost one to thy fold!

The original reading of the next to the last stanza of "At Port Royal" was: —

"That close as sin and suffering joined,
We march to Fate abreast,
The dread avenger stalks behind
Oppressor and oppressed."

When he saw the proof-sheet he improved these lines, as follows: —

"That laws of changeless justice bind
Oppressor with oppressed;
And, close as sin and suffering joined,
We march to Fate abreast."

Early in 1862 he wrote to Fields, "Some time or other if I can get a day of health I hope to write something better than I have yet for the Magazine. It is in me, but, as Thersites says of the wit of Ajax, it lies as coldly as fire in flint. I would not mind suffering if I could but *do* something." The first

reference to "Andrew Rykman's Prayer" found in his correspondence is in a letter to Fields written in June, 1862: "I have by me a poem upon which I have bestowed much thought, and which I think is in some respects the best thing I have ever written. I will bring it or send it soon."

The abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia had from the first been considered by Mr. Whittier the most imperative duty of the nation. We have here his words of joy and thankfulness when the work was accomplished. In a letter to Sumner, April, 1862, he said: "Glory to God! Nothing but this hearty old Methodist response will express my joy at the passage of the bill for the abolition of slavery in the District, in the Senate of the United States. I hail it as the first of the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness' which are to follow the chastening of war, which now for the present 'seemeth grievous.' It is a great event, a mighty step in the right direction. I can now lift up my head without shame in the face of the world. I am thankful that Massachusetts was well represented in the Senate — that to her belongs so much of the honor of the noble achievement. All the friends of freedom congratulate thee and Wilson. Thank Wilson from me for his reply to Davis — and above all for his new movement to cut the claws and draw the teeth of the [dragon]. I have often wished to write thee and Wilson, but have feared to trouble you with any unnecessary correspondence. Believe me, I have watched your labors with interest and sympathy. . . . It is hard be to a mere looker-on at a time like this. But

such is my condition, I am not allowed to write — indeed I cannot without great suffering. But the good cause goes on, and I bless God that I am permitted to see it. It is getting to be plain with everybody that there can be no union with slavery — that we must be 'first pure' before we can be 'peaceable' men. . . . Since writing the above I see that the abolition bill has passed the House. I presume there is no doubt of the President's sanction."

"The Cry of a Lost Soul," written in 1862, so impressed the Emperor of Brazil that he translated it into Portuguese, and sent it copied in his own hand to Mr. Whittier, in token of the pleasure it had given him; the copy was accompanied by a well mounted pair of the birds which gave title to the poem; these are now a highly prized memento in possession of his niece.

He sent "Andrew Rykman" to Fields in November, 1862, and changes were suggested by his critical friend. On the 2d of December, he wrote, adhering to his imperfect rhyme: "I return Mr. Rykman. I know that 'pearl' and 'marl' do not jingle together well — but the lines have a meaning in them, and if the reader will roll his r's a little they will do. I add a verse at the tail of it. John de Labadie was a devout 'come-outer' in Holland two centuries ago. . . . Abraham's message is a great improvement in point of style. Its conclusion is really noble."

Early in 1863, when there was much distress in the manufacturing districts of England, on account of our civil war, which had cut off their supply of

cotton, and subscriptions for the relief of the sufferers were being raised in the manufacturing towns of New England, Mr. Whittier secured a contribution of $238 in Amesbury and Salisbury, and forwarded it to his friend, the eminent British orator and statesman, John Bright, with the following note, dated 24th 1st mo., 1863: —

"I take pleasure in inclosing to thy care for the benefit of the unemployed people of your manufacturing districts, a bill of exchange on Tallmont, Brothers & Co., of London, for £32 14s 1d ($238 of our money), the sum contributed by the people of the villages of Amesbury and Salisbury for that purpose. I also inclose the proceedings of the meeting which originated the subscription. With a grateful appreciation of thy generous efforts to promote good feeling between the people of England and the United States, and of thy eloquent and truthful presentation of the great questions involved in our terrible arbitrament, I am very truly thy friend."

The resolutions of the Amesbury meeting were from the pen of Mr. Whittier.

John Bright acknowledged the benefaction in the following letter, dated London, February 27, 1863: "Thy letter has given me much pleasure. The contribution inclosed in it I have paid over to the secretary of the Lancashire relief fund in Manchester. Thy letter and the report of the meeting at Amesbury have been published in the Manchester 'Examiner and Times,' the most widely circulated paper in the north of England. I am sure the kindness towards our people indicated by

the contributions has given much pleasure in many quarters. . . . I have been a warm admirer and a constant reader of thy poems for many years, and I can imagine something of the deep interest which the great conflict must excite in thee. It seems as if a peaceable termination of the great evil of slavery was impossible — the blindness, the pride, and the passion of men made it impossible. War was and is the only way out of the desperate difficulty of your country, and fearful as is the path, it cannot be escaped. I only hope there may be virtue enough in the North, notwithstanding the terrible working of the poison of slavery, to throw off the coil, and to permit of a renovated and restored nation. . . . With us, we are witnessing a great change of opinion, or opinions hitherto silent are being expressed. In every town a great meeting is being held to discuss the 'American Question,' and the vote is almost everywhere unanimously in favor of the North. The rich and the titled may hate the Republic, but the *people* do not. . . . My daughter sometimes sends thee a newspaper with a report of some speech of mine. She is as much an American in sympathy as I am, and she wishes me to say how much pleasure she has derived from thy poems, and how much she hopes all thy noble words for freedom may soon bear fruit throughout your country. I await tidings from the States with anxiety — but I have faith in freedom and in good. With many thanks for thy kind note, and for the sympathy with our people manifested by the Amesbury contribution, believe me always thy sincere friend."

On the 6th of March, 1863, Whittier wrote to Fields: "I shall send in a day or two a ballad, 'La Comtesse' — the scene at 'The Rocks' on the Merrimac, which I am sure thee will like. I think it better by far than 'Amy Wentworth,' if I am a fit judge. . . . Holmes's lyric[1] in the last 'Atlantic' will be historical. In its way it is equal to the 'Hunt after the Captain,' which is great praise."

When, a little later, he sent "The Countess," it was accompanied by the following note: "I hope thee will like my pastoral little piece. I am sure Mrs. F. will. If thee see, on looking it over, that its simplicity crosses the border line, and becomes silliness, do me the favor to say so, and it shall go hard if I don't make it as dignified as Pope's 'Essay on Man,' or Dr. Johnson's 'Vanity of Human Wishes.'"

In his preface to "The Countess," as also in the text of the poem, Mr. Whittier falls into the error made by some other writers, when he says that Mary Ingalls died in less than one year after her marriage to Count Vipart. Miss Rebecca I. Davis, in her "Gleanings from the Valley of the Merrimac," having access to the diary kept by a prominent resident of East Haverhill in the first years of the present century, says she finds that the marriage occurred March 21, 1805. The Countess died January 5, 1807. Count Vipart, after the death of his wife, returned to Guadaloupe, where he married again, and where he died and was buried. His children were living in

[1] "*Choose you this Day whom ye will Serve.*"

Guadaloupe in 1877. But it is true, as the poem states, that his remains now rest in the family lot at Bordeaux, France, where the Viparts held a high rank in the nobility. The Count and his cousin, Joseph Rochemont de Poyen, came to this country and settled at Haverhill, at the time of the insurrection in Guadaloupe. Mr. Whittier's only brother married Abby, a daughter of Joseph Rochemont de Poyen.

The story which suggested to Mr. Whittier his ballad of "Barbara Frietchie" came to him from Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth, of Georgetown, D. C., the well-known novelist, whose acquaintance he made while he was corresponding editor of the "National Era." On the 21st of July, 1863, she wrote to him the following note: "I send this little note out merely in quest of you. If it should find you, please let me know your exact address, as I have a message to deliver you. You need only put your address in the inclosed envelope. When I get it I will write to you."

As soon as she obtained the address she sent the following narrative, and the ballad founded upon it was written within a fortnight after its receipt in Amesbury: —

"'When Lee's army occupied Frederick, the only Union flag displayed in the city was held from an attic window by Mrs. Barbara Frietchie, a widow lady, aged ninety-seven years.' Such was the paragraph that went the round of the Washington papers last September. Some time afterwards, from friends who were in Frederick at the time, I heard the whole story. It was the story of

a woman's heroism, which, when heard, seemed as much to belong to you as a book picked up with your autograph on the fly leaf. So here it is: Barbara Frietchie was born in 1766; she was ten years old at the breaking out of the revolutionary war, and was fifteen years old at its close; therefore at the most susceptible period of her life she must have drawn in from that heroic epoch the ardent spirit of patriotism which inspired her act. When on the morning of the 6th of September, the advance of Lee's army, led by the formidable rebel general 'Stonewall' Jackson, entered Frederick, every Union flag was lowered, and the halliards cut; every store and every dwelling-house was closed; the inhabitants had retreated indoors; the streets were deserted, and, to quote the official report, 'the city wore a church-yard aspect.' But Mrs. Barbara Frietchie, taking one of the Union flags, went up to the top of her house, opened a garret window, and held it forth. The rebel army marched up the street, saw the flag; the order was given, 'Halt! Fire!' and a volley was discharged at the window from which it was displayed. The flag-staff was partly broken, so that the flag drooped; the old lady drew it in, broke off the fragment, and, taking the stump with the flag still attached to it in her hand, stretched herself as far out of the window as she could, held the stars and stripes at arm's length, waving over the rebels, and cried out in a voice of indignation and sorrow: 'Fire at this old head, then, boys; it is not more venerable than your flag.' They fired no more; they passed in silence and with

downcast looks; and she secured the flag in its place, where it waved unmolested during the whole of the rebel occupation of the city. 'Stonewall' would not permit her to be troubled. The rebel army evacuated Frederick on the 11th, and our troops, under General Burnside, entered on the 12th. 'Then,' to quote the document again, 'flags of all sizes and from every conceivable place were displayed.' But as for the heroic old lady, she died a few days after; some thought she died of joy at the presence of the Union army, and some that she died of excitement and fatigue from the 'lionization' she received; for those who could not emulate the old lady's courage did honor to her act."

This is the whole story, as Mr. Whittier had it when he wrote the ballad. Of the substantial accuracy of the narrative many convincing proofs came to him, from time to time, in the midst of the animated and prolonged controversy the ballad elicited. He never felt responsible for the details, although his verses, it will be seen, follow quite closely the version sent by Mrs. Southworth, who says she obtained the story from Mr. C. S. Bramsburg, a neighbor of hers and a connection of Barbara's. When he told it to Mrs. Southworth and her son Richmond, her son suggested that it would be a grand subject for a poem by Whittier, and upon that hint the story was forwarded to him. On the 8th of September, 1863, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Southworth: "I heartily thank thee for thy kind letter and its inclosed message. It ought to have fallen into better hands, but I have just

written out a little ballad of 'Barbara Frietchie,' which will appear in the next 'Atlantic.' If it is good for anything thee deserve all the credit of it."

The poem was published in the "Atlantic" for October, and was immediately copied in most Northern papers. At the time when much was being said about the apocryphal nature of the stories upon which some of his ballads were founded, and particularly about the "Barbara Frietchie" legend, Mr. Whittier remarked, "That there was a Dame Frietchie in Frederick who loved the old flag is not disputed by any one. As for the rest I do not feel responsible. If there was no such occurrence, so much the worse for Frederick City." Afterward, in sportive vein, he referred to Betsey Prig's incredulity in regard to Mrs. Harris, and did n't see that Sairey Gamp was responsible for the non-existence of this creature of her imagination!

Mrs. Mary Quantrell, of Frederick, wrote to Mr. Whittier, claiming to be the real heroine of the ballad, and there cannot be much doubt of the fact that she also waved a Union flag when the rebel troops passed through the town. The evidence is sufficient, however, that there was a Barbara Frietchie, venerable in years, who either from her attic window, or from the sidewalk, showed her devotion for the old flag in a brave and uncompromising manner, and her name deserves the honor conferred upon it by the immortal ballad. The poem was sent to Mr. Fields, for the "Atlantic," in August, and the following letter indicates

the heartiness of the welcome it received. A new edition of Whittier's complete works was at that time in press. Mr. Fields's letter is dated August 24, 1863: "'Barbara' is most welcome, and I will find room for it in the October number, most certainly. A proof will be sent to you in a few days. You were right in thinking I should like it, for so I do, as I like few things in this world. The piece must go into your book, of course. We go to press at once with the new volume. Will there be any introductory piece? Inclosed is a check for fifty dollars, but Barbara's weight should be in gold."

To one of many friends who asked him if Barbara was a myth, he answered in a letter dated October 19, 1890: "I had a portrait of the good Lady Barbara from the saintly hand of Dorothea Dix, whose life is spent in works of love and duty, and a cane from Barbara's cottage, sent me by Dr. Steiner of the Maryland Senate. Whether she did all that my poem ascribed to her or not, she was a brave and true woman. I followed the account given me in a private letter and in the papers of the time."

The cane referred to above was brought to him in 1873, by Mr. Bramsburg, who accompanied Mrs. Southworth in a visit to Amesbury. It is said to be the one the old lady used to shake at the boys of the town who would come about her house and hurrah for Jeff Davis.

A writer in the "Century," in an article upon this ballad, which denied that it had any foundation whatever in fact, made the remark that "the story will perhaps live, as Mr. Whittier has

boasted, until it gets beyond the reach of correction." To this Mr. Whittier replied in a note to the editor of the magazine: —

"Those who know me will bear witness that I am not in the habit of boasting of anything whatever, least of all of congratulating myself upon a doubtful statement outliving the possibility of correction. I certainly made no 'boast' of the kind imputed to me. The poem of 'Barbara Frietchie' was written in good faith. The story was no invention of mine. It came to me from sources which I regarded as entirely reliable; it had been published in newspapers, and had gained public credence in Washington and Maryland before my poem was written. I had no reason to doubt its accuracy then, and I am still constrained to believe that it had foundation in fact. If I thought otherwise I should not hesitate to express it. I have no pride of authorship to interfere with my allegiance to truth."

The poems that deal directly with the war and its issues, like "Thy Will be Done," "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," "To John C. Frémont," "Astræa at the Capitol," and "The Battle Autumn of 1862," would not allow the people to forget that slavery must die before peace could be restored. When the proclamation of freedom to the slaves of rebels in Missouri was made by General Frémont in August, 1861, and countermanded as premature by President Lincoln, Whittier gave a prompt expression of his opinion that the general had taken

> "counsel but of common sense
> To strike at cause as well as consequence."

Interesting incidents connected with this poem, showing how its strong words cheered the heart of Frémont at a critical time, are given in the following account of her first interview with Whittier, contributed to these pages by Mrs. Jessie Benton Frémont. She visited Amesbury in September, 1863 : —

Finding Amesbury easy of reach from Nahant, where we had a cottage, we went there one morning to visit Mr. Whittier, knowing I had that to tell him which would give him pleasure. The general was in New York just then, but my daughter and myself had as escort the dear friend in battle, as in exile, of Kossuth,— a fellow-Hungarian of generous soul who had again drawn his sword for his adopted country, Zagonyi.

When we asked for Mr. Whittier we were answered he had just gone out. We were sorry, and said so, adding we had come from Nahant purposely to see him. The ingenuous face of the blushing young girl told distinctly of the conflict between her obedience to directions and her regret at seeing us so disappointed. She hospitably asked if we would not rest after our walk up from the station, and as we sat in the cool parlor a splendid old parrot — the gray parrot, of Africa, with its scarlet head — began talking. I have always had a weakness for parrots, and had some of them at Nahant, and knowing *their* tricks and manners made acquaintance with this evidently objecting bird. As I supposed, this parrot had in its repertoire the usual sailor-Spanish-ship words

of instruction, and its funny surprise at hearing me use them, and hurried sidling-up for nearer talk, made us all laugh. The young girl told us it was not usually so friendly, that it had been her grandmother's pet, and was a dignified bird not given to answering laughs and chaffing. "Do wait a little," she said at last, "maybe Uncle has not gone *very* far;" and we waited, — to be rewarded by the return of the poet with his smiling niece Lizzie, who had evidently overcome his reluctance with difficulty, for his whole tall upright figure and serious look was in protest at being made to see strangers, when he was going off for quiet.

It is a risk to meet a favorite author — he may overthrow the ideal one must have formed — but we had no disappointment when we saw Mr. Whittier. Those luminous eyes! So direct, such unmixed a look of simple questioning inquiry, with no touch of self-consciousness, or offense given or taken, such lively refreshing absence of the usual conventional expressions toward a visitor, I had never seen except in very young children; it was the naked truth, habitual, and above all small disguises. Those eyes told of one "who had kept innocency all his days."

I began by telling him he had strongly influenced my young life; that I was but twenty-two when I cut from a newspaper and pasted in my prayer-book his "Angel of Patience"; that the lines

> "The throbs of wounded pride to still,
> And make our own our Father's will,"

were the hardest lines to get *by heart* I had ever

tried; for patience and submission were not natural growths in my part of the country.

"Thy speech *is* Southern; what is thy name?"

"Not yet," I said. "I am Southern; but let me tell you more first. I want to tell you of your last, your greatest, help to us both — to me, and greatest, to my husband."

And then I told him as briefly as I could how over thirty thousand men were next day to break camp for active pursuit of the enemy, — "the enemies of the Union, Mr. Whittier. It was Sunday evening; the setting sun lit up the October colors of the trees, and picked out the white of tents covering the many hills; the men were hushed into reverent stillness, for the bands played the air, and then voices, swelling to thousands on thousands, take up the familiar words: —

"'Before Jehovah's awful throne.'

Before that awful throne who could know how soon he must appear? And why? What good attained for which a man should lay down his life?

"The day's mail was brought into the general's tent. He had no heart to open it, for his highest, dearest, purest hopes had been flung back on him, and himself disapproved. But I, who was always the secretary and other-self, went on with the things of every day, 'taking the burden of life again,' and think of my reward when in the New York 'Evening Post' there met my eye your inspired, prophetic words.[1]

[1] The poem entitled *To John C. Frémont*, beginning

"Thy error, Frémont, simply was to act
A brave man's part, without the statesman's tact."

On the 2d of March, 1883, Mr. Whittier replied as follows to

"Uplifted beyond the time of trial, I went out with the paper to where, standing over the fire — as he so often had stood in lonely times of suffering and dejection — was the general, alone. I read him the whole. He was speechless with increasing, overwhelming, glorified feeling — transfigured. Taking the paper, and bending to read it, for himself, by the blazing logs, at length he said, —

"'He speaks for posterity. I *knew* I was right. I want these words on my tombstone: —

> "God has spoken through thee,
> *Irrevocable*, the mighty words *Be free!*"

Now I can die for what I have done.'"

Whittier had grasped my arm, and his eyes blazed. "What is thy name?"

"Frémont."

Without a word he swung out of the room, to return, infolding in his helping embrace a frail little woman, tenderly saying to the invalid he was bringing from her seclusion, —

"Elizabeth, this is Jessie Frémont — under our roof. Our mother would have been glad to see this day."

After this, we came down (with our hearts in

a request of Mrs. Frémont's for permission to publish the poem in the memoirs of her husband: "I was glad to see thy writing once more — and glad to know of thy wanting this recollection of thy time, so full of interest and wonderful events — and glad to comply with thy request to copy the lines addressed to thy husband, who struck the first brave blow for liberty. The years press heavily upon me, and the death of my brother, the last of our family, is a great loss. But I am thankful that I have lived to see slavery's end, the Union established, and the whole country in a prosperous condition."

our throats all the same) to every-day talk; but the every day of the war time was a sublimated life in itself, a grand epoch to have lived in, and taken part in.

Injustice roused Mr. Whittier's suppressed combativeness. Now, here before him, was the great injustice to the true feeling of the North, and to the patient, hopeless slaves; and to the fine young man who had made the Balaklava charge at Springfield. In Zagonyi he saw how the trust of foreign lovers of freedom had been used, then scorned. But he saw, too, beyond it all the inevitable fall of the girdled Upas-tree, and he knew that time at last sifts out the truth. And Truth *can* wait.

There was a convention of some kind in the town, and Whittier confessed he had escaped into his pear orchard when he saw us turning in at the gate. But for the gentle niece we should both have lost a treasured memory; *she* quickly separated us from the convention idea. We only left on the latest daylight train, and the following letter shows how Mr. Whittier, too, found it a day to remember. It was written October 24, 1863:

"It was very thoughtful on thy part to inform me of thy unexpected Hegira southward. I would [have been glad] to see thee and the general in your own quiet 'Anchorage,' but am not certain that I should have been well enough to do so. But I must thank thee heartily for thy little visit at our home. We have in some sort known and loved thee and thine for a long time, and seeing thee has confirmed our impressions. It was one

of the desires of our dear mother to see thee and thy husband. She spoke of you during her last short illness, and expressed the deepest regret at the result of the election [1856]. I am very happy to know that my word of encouragement was not wholly in vain, during your trials in Missouri. I sent the lines to thee at St. Louis, but thee was absent at the time, and perhaps did not receive them. The villagers have complained sadly because I did not let them know that Jessie Frémont was in the place. Our young men and women wanted to see Colonel Zagonyi, the hero of the Body Guard. When thee comes again we will have the bells rung and satisfy them. My sister joins me in grateful remembrance of your visit, and sends love to thee and thy daughter. My niece Lizzie sends love to Miss Lilly. Remember me kindly to the general. Would that he were at Washington, commander-in-chief. That God may bless you both abundantly is the sincere desire of thy friend."

From time to time we "passed the trail," but without that we knew it was "all 's well" with our friendship. Here in my Sunset Home his letter of introduction enabled me to know and make for his cousins a charming winter day among beautiful gardens and kindly welcomings. Mr. Whittier's note from Danvers, November 29, 1889, refers to them, and though the delicate handwriting has become enlarged to suit the failing sight, yet the quick flow of ideas is still his best: —

"I was glad to get thy kind letter. We were talking about thee and the general the day be-

fore. I suppose we felt the letter on its way, by what the Psychical Research Society calls telepathy. I am feeling the burden of many years, and am not able to read or write much, owing to failing sight. I do not know as it is any serious privation to lose the reading of newspapers, but to put books aside, and not be able to write to my friends, is another matter. My cousins desire to be kindly remembered to thee. They greatly enjoyed meeting you both when in Los Angeles. I fight over the Frémont campaign often. Memory recalls the stirring incidents of that memorable struggle, when thy own name was ever coupled with that of thy husband, and the cry of 'Frémont and Jessie' echoed over the entire North. God bless thy noble husband!"

I do not think Mr. Whittier would be unwilling for these letters to be published. They are like his written songs of inspiration, that led men to put highest thought into action, and bear all, for —

> "Not painlessly does God recast
> And mould anew a Nation."

And it is my abiding pride and honor to have shared with those who had to —

> "Wait beneath the furnace blast
> The pangs of transformation,"

and who rejoice with Whittier when he "felt the years press heavily upon him" — "but I am thankful that I have lived to see slavery's end, the Union established, and the whole country in a prosperous condition."

Jessie Benton Frémont.

Los Angeles, April, 1893.

The following letter of Whittier's, written September 19, 1861, and refering to the Frémont proclamation, was addressed to his gallant friend, of the days of the Kansas struggle, Major George L. Stearns, the same to whose memory was addressed the tender tribute written on the occasion of his death in 1867, which contains this stanza : —

> "So the bed was sweet to die on
> Whence he saw the doors wide swung
> Against whose bolted iron
> The strength of his life was flung."

"I presume I should fully agree with you as to the duty and expediency of striking more directly at the real cause of the war. As heretofore, I shall use my endeavors to this end. If the present terrible struggle does not involve emancipation, partial or complete, it is at once the most wicked and the most ludicrous war ever waged. I hope the President has not undertaken to tie up the hands of Frémont. That would be worse for us than a score of Bull Runs."

Probably no other of Whittier's war hymns had such wide and immediate effect upon the popular mind as the one set to the music of Luther's hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott," beginning with the lines : —

> "We wait beneath the furnace blast
> The pangs of transformation."

It was read in the Cabinet of the President, in every household in the North, and sung in the Union camps. John W. Hutchinson, with his family of singers, had been given permission by

Secretary Cameron, after the first battle of Bull Run, to sing to the soldiers encamped upon the Virginia side of the Potomac, and he ventured to introduce this hymn, which he called "The Furnace Blast." On one occasion he had an audience of two thousand soldiers, and as he sang Whittier's hymn with strong feeling, his whole soul wrapped in its sentiment, an intense stillness pervaded the house, until he came to the words: —

> "What whets the knife for the Union's life?
> Hark to the answer: Slavery!"

Then a solitary hiss was heard in a remote corner; there was instant commotion, and the soldiers were with difficulty restrained from summary dealing with the man who had expressed his disapprobation. This disturbance was reported to headquarters, and Mr. Hutchinson was brought before General Kearney, who ordered him to sing no more in the camps. General Franklin sent for copies of all the songs in the Hutchinson programme, and selected this hymn as incendiary. Later, an order came from General McClellan revoking the permit given the Hutchinson family to sing to the troops. Mr. Hutchinson returned to Washington, called on Secretary Chase, and told him the story. At his request, a copy of the prohibited song was given the Secretary, and he submitted it to the Cabinet at its next meeting. President Lincoln remarked that these "were just the songs he wanted his soldiers to hear," and gave the Hutchinsons permission to cross the Potomac again.

Lucy Larcom, then teaching in the Wheaton Female Seminary, at Norton, Mass., was planning a vacation excursion with friends to the Pemigewasset valley, and urged Mr. Whittier to join the party. He wrote, under date of June 17, 1863: "I want badly to go up to the hill country, for its own sake, and if thee and —— are there, that constitutes another very decided inducement. I am sure the trip would be pleasant and profitable to thee, even if I cannot be with you. So if thee can go, go it; 'if thou mayest be free, use it rather.' With the best disposition in the world to visit the Pemigewasset valley at this time, I fear I shall not be able to do so. I must go, then, in imagination only, and

> "'Shut my eyes in the lowlands
> To dream a dream of the hills,
> The sweep of a host of mountains,
> The flash of a hundred rills.'

I take it you are not expecting Stuart and his rebel scaramouches at your school. Think what a fluttering in your dovecote such a visit would occasion! I am half inclined to believe that the rascals will reach Philadelphia; and amidst all my anxieties and regrets, I cannot help smiling to think of the drab-colored panic among the staid and quiet people of that city!"

Again he wrote, in 1863: "God only knows whether we really deserve success in this terrible war. When I think of the rapacity of contractors and office-holders, and of the brutal and ferocious prejudice against the poor blacks, as evinced at Detroit and at Port Royal, I almost despair, so

far as we, the whites of the North, are concerned. God's will be done, whatever becomes of us!"

In September, 1863, after a pleasant visit to the Shoals, with the Whittiers, Lucy Larcom was suddenly called to the West on account of the death of a loved sister. Mr. Whittier wrote to her, under date of September 30: —

"We often thought of thee on thy sad journey to the West. As we walk down the autumnal slopes of life, how the shadows lengthen and deepen! But 'in the even time there shall be light.' 'Death,' said the heathen stoic, 'is according to Nature, and nothing is evil which is according to Nature,' and there is deep wisdom and consolation in his saying. But as Christians, our trust is not alone in the steady sequence of Nature, but in the tender heart of our Father, and the infinite love revealed in His human manifestation. . . . We are now having fine weather after weeks of cold and damp. On the whole, we have not had our usual proportion of sunshine this season. But glorious October will make amends. How the maple splendor will climb the hills of Campton! What hues will be mirrored in the Pemigewasset! In what a radiant transfiguration will Winnepesaukee indulge! I don't suppose I shall see them, but it is some satisfaction to know just how they will look. And there will be abundant beauty nearer home, and everywhere. It is a beautiful world — this of ours — a portent of the exceeding beauty yet to be revealed, I suppose. Let us be grateful, and happy as we can; holding fast our faith in the Eternal Goodness."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

12th mo., 1863.

How much we like thy "Loyal Woman's No!" It is grand in its indignant pride of patriotism. I see it is immensely popular — a proof that the people regard it as a "word in season." It has not the sweet rhythmic flow of "Hilary," a poem which anybody might be proud of, but it is stronger and deeper, freighted with meaning and passion. . . . It is a real disappointment to me that I cannot attend the grand Music Hall fair. But I 'm used to it, and am not going to complain or repine about it. The last summer and fall have enriched me with such sweet pictures and pleasant memories that I ought not to mention these winter inconveniences and detentions. Our Shoals expedition is a capital resource of fireside reverie. And then how much we have all to be thankful for in the improved condition of public affairs — the rising hopes of loyalty, the growing despair of treason — the President's firmness in standing fast by his Proclamation! We are living in a grand time; one year now is worth a dozen of the years of our ancestors. . . .

The "Hymn sung at Christmas by the Scholars of St. Helena's Island, S. C.," was written for Miss Charlotte Forten, a friend in whom Mr. Whittier had taken much interest while she was acquiring an education, and who in 1863 was teaching the freedmen on the island above named. Of Miss Forten (now Mrs. Grimké), Mr. Whittier said in a letter to Charles Sumner written in 1870, "She is

slightly colored; her grandfather, James Forten, of Philadelphia, was a friend of Rush and Franklin, served in the revolutionary war, and was a prisoner in the Jersey prison ship — a noble old man!" She gives the following account of the reception and singing of the hymn: —

"It was in 1863 that I was teaching there, and as Christmas was approaching, I asked Mr. Whittier if he would write a little hymn for our scholars to sing. So he very kindly sent it. I read it to the children, and showed them his picture, and told them about him; and they were much delighted, and proud to think the hymn was written especially for them. They learned it readily, and sang it with great spirit on that bright, beautiful Christmas Day, in the old church, amid grand, moss-draped live oaks. It was a scene I shall never forget."

Mr. Whittier's reply to Miss Forten's request for the poem was in these words: "I send herewith a little song for your Christmas festival. I was too ill to write anything else, but I could not resist the desire to comply with thy request. . . . Our old friend and former neighbor, Colonel T. W. Higginson, commands the 1st Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers. I hope thee will see and know him. He is a rare man, a gentleman, scholar, and true friend of the slave. Elizabeth, who is too ill to write to-day, sends her love. She says, 'Tell Charlotte I am so glad she is there. I wish I was able to be with her! Tell her to write often, and let me know all about her doings.' She sends a picture of her brother; she has none of her own —

very wrong of her not to have. Most sincerely, dear friend, do I rejoice at the good providence of God, which has permitted thee to act so directly for the poor, yet deeply interesting people of the Sea Islands."

Miss Forten wrote after meeting Colonel Higginson, and Mr. Whittier replied: "I am glad thee hast met Colonel Higginson, and to know him is to like him. He is a worthy coadjutor of General Saxton. I read General Saxton's Thanksgiving proclamation with the deepest emotion. It is the most touching and beautiful official paper I ever saw. God bless him! 'The bravest are the tenderest.' I am a peace man, but nevertheless I am rejoiced that the 1st Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers have behaved so bravely and manfully in the late expedition. Twenty such regiments, under twenty such men as Higginson and Dr. Rogers, would soon give a new aspect to the struggle. . . . Invalids as we are, sister and I long for the sun and air of summer. I send thee a volume of A. Crummell's.[1] Its author is a churchman and conservative, but his writings are a noble refutation of the charge of the black man's inferiority. They are model discourses, clear, classic, and chaste."

Again he wrote: "I think thee must have enjoyed thy visit to the Sea Islands exceedingly. I wish I could have been with you. We have had

[1] Rev. Alexander Crummell, D. D., born in New York about 1820, educated at the University of Cambridge, England, and author of several works, including *The Greatness of Christ, and Other Sermons*, which is the volume to which reference is made. Dr. Crummell was rector at St. Luke's, Washington, D. C.

a cold spring, and still the dreadful east winds blow, and sing their harsh discords among the apple blossoms. It is our [Quaker] Quarterly Meeting to-day, and our house is overrun with drab-colored people. I inclose a sprig of mayflower from our woods."

Mr. Whittier took a deep interest in the patriotic work of his friend, Thomas Starr King, in California, and sent him encouraging letters. Only Mr. King's part in the correspondence is available for these pages. Early in the war, Mr. Whittier remembered how his friend, in the days of the Kansas trouble, had given wings to his poem, "The Panorama," and sent him copies of the songs designed to keep up the heart of the North in the midst of the civil war. This passage occurs in a letter written by Mr. King early in the contest: "How awful the moral desolation of the war! Yet there is no retreat. We are half way over in a tide of blood. We return only to Sodom. We cross, and it is the promised land. . . . God accounts physical life cheap on the globe to the establishment of justice. Let us pray that we be not found utterly unworthy of His protection and blessing, and that our blood and treasure be not poured out in vain. The only way to get anything for what we have already paid of blood is to shed more. I rejoice to think that, if we conquer, the South is to be blessed more widely than the North. We are loving our enemies with our cannon, if they are battering down the bulwarks of the slavery Bastile. . . . Mrs. Neall was in our city some weeks ago, but could not stay to hear

the lecture. She writes me most delightful letters. It would raise the proof of life in our city, if she would come here. . . . And now, my noble friend, with great gratitude for your kindness, and honest pride that I can serve as a slight conductor of your power to our far Western Americans, I am ever yours."

The beautiful church built for Mr. King, in San Francisco, was dedicated to the worship of God in January, 1864, and soon afterward solemnly consecrated to the "holy cause of Freedom and Our Country." In anticipation of this patriotic dedication, Mr. King expressed a wish in December that he might have a hymn by Mr. Whittier to be sung on that occasion, but he did not venture to ask for it himself. Mrs. Hannah L. Neall, whose friendship for Mr. Whittier dated back to the days of his residence in Philadelphia, volunteered to make the request, and the hymn beginning, —

> "Amidst these glorious works of Thine,
> The vast Sierra's cloud-hung pine,
> And awful Shasta's icy shrine" —

was at once composed and forwarded to Mr. King, with a note expressing the fear of the poet, which was shared by his sister, that it might not prove to be adapted for music. Mr. King in his letter of thanks, dated January 1, 1864, did not share this doubt.

On the 28th of January, 1864, when he received his royalty upon the sales of his volume "In War Time," he wrote to Mr. Fields: "Thy favor, with remittance of $340, is received. It makes me rich

as Crœsus. I am like one who counting over his hoard finds it double what he expected. From a merely shoddy point of view the sum might seem small, but we did not cheat the government out of it — that 's some satisfaction. . . . I have just sent what I think is a hymn to T. S. King for the opening of his new steeple-house. It was kind and like thyself to tell me that my rhyme [" Barbara Frietchie "] found such approval. It is only when they are blamed or praised that we fully realize how much we love these bantlings of ours."

In March, 1864, Mr. Whittier was invited to visit the Army of the Potomac, in camp near Culpeper, Va. Brigadier-General Rice, in sending the invitation, wrote : " Your loyal verse has made us all your friends, lightening the wearisomeness of our march, brightening our lonely campfires, and cheering our hearts in battle, when ' the flags of war like storm-birds fly ! ' "

One of the neatest criticisms of Mr. Whittier's attitude during the civil war was made by Gail Hamilton, who worked for him a pair of slippers. On each slipper stood an American eagle, with vigilant eye, in belligerent attitude, ready for either defense or attack, with claws full of thunderbolts. The witty embroiderer had toned down the belligerence of the spirited birds by using that most peaceable of colors, the Quaker drab ! Mr. Whittier used to lend these slippers to his visitors, and call attention with a smile to the amusing insinuation they conveyed. He said the writer's needle was almost as sharp as her tongue or pen.

On one occasion during the war, he fell into con-

versation with a Quaker with whom he was well acquainted, upon a railway train in New Hampshire. His friend told him he was on his way to contract for a lot of oak timber which he had reason to suppose would be used in the construction of a ship of war at the Kittery navy yard, and he showed that the matter was worrying his conscience as a Friend, and hoped for some word from Mr. Whittier that would quiet the troublesome monitor. But Whittier saw that his friend had fully decided to supply the timber, and had a mind to tease him; so he argued against the transaction, and brought out with much force the inconsistency of a Friend's supplying timber for such a terrible weapon of war. Before they parted his friend began to show uneasiness about the matter, but was reassured as Mr. Whittier bade him farewell, by the remark, "My friend, if thee does furnish any of that timber thee spoke of, be sure that it is all sound!" That Quaker timber was in the stout ribs of the "Kearsarge," when she circled about the doomed "Alabama," off Cherbourg, in the most picturesque naval combat of modern times.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

6th mo., 1864.

I intended when I left Providence to have written thee before this, but I found sister Elizabeth on my arrival home very ill indeed, and she has been so most of the time since. I am more discouraged than ever about her. . . . Another of the old landmarks of the past has been removed. My old schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, died last week.

While he lived he served to connect me with my early boyhood, or rather childhood. I shall miss him. He lived at Newbury and often visited us. I found a letter of his awaiting me on my return from Yearly Meeting. Please tell Joseph and Gertrude I did not arrive home a moment too soon on my own and my sister's account. Dr. Bowditch has been down to see Lizzie; he did not speak discouragingly, nor in fact encouragingly, but hoped if she could take sufficient nourishment she would get the better of her trouble.

Whittier's old friend and schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin, usually remarkably bright-witted and merry-hearted, was in the last years of his life subject to fits of religious depression. He imagined he was predestined to be eternally lost, and did not rebel against the divine decree, but accepted it and fell into a mild melancholy, distressing to all friends who had known him not only as one of the happiest, but also one of the best of men — a philanthropist, who had shown his readiness to sacrifice even his life for the liberty and happiness of his fellow-men. Mr. Whittier, finding him in this mood at one time, asked him, "Joshua, don't thee hate God, who has doomed thee to everlasting torment?" "Why, no, it is for the good of all, that some are punished." "Joshua, thee has spent thy life doing good, and now thee is of course getting ready to do all the hurt thee can to thy fellow-men?" "No, indeed, my feelings have not changed in the least in this regard." "Thee is going to hell, then, in this mood?" "Why, yes, I

am reconciled to the will of God, and have no ill feelings toward Him or my race." "Now, Joshua, thee is going to hell with a heart full of love for everybody — what can the devil find for such an one as thee to do?" This struck the right chord. The good old man laughed merrily at the idea of the puzzle Satan would be in to find occupation for him, and resumed his old cheerfulness at once. When Mr. Coffin died, Mr. Whittier wrote this inscription for his tombstone: —

> "Teacher and Christian, rest!
> Thy threescore years and ten,
> Thy work of tongue and pen,
> May well abide the test
> Of love to God and men!
> Here let thy pupils pause, and let the slave
> Smooth with free hands thy grave!"

The summer of 1864 was a sad one in the Whittier household, for Elizabeth was seriously ill. On the 30th of August, only four days before the death of his dearly loved sister, he wrote to Bayard Taylor: "How sorry I am that my sister's very feeble state of health compels me to say that I fear your otherwise most welcome visit must be postponed! For several months she has been confined in a dark room, in extreme pain and weakness. Nothing has given her more regret than her inability to see her friends — and for thee and thy Marie she would have the warmest welcome, were she able to bear the excitement. Fields will tell thee how sadly and heavily the bright summer has passed with me. . . . The Vadso church hangs in our sitting-room, and we value it highly as a memento of thy Northern travel. It gives me a good idea, I must think, of Arctic scenery."

The painful duty of announcing the death of his sister came to him on the 3d of September, 1864, and he wrote to Lucy Larcom: "Our dear Lizzie is no longer with us. She passed away this morning. Notwithstanding her great weakness, I find I was not prepared for the event. It is terrible — the great motive of life seems lost." Again he wrote, September 14: "We were friends before thee knew my dear sister; but now all who loved her, and whom she loved in turn, are nearer and dearer to me. I shall not be able to visit Manchester. The reaction from the anxious care and solicitude of the last few months I still feel. I feel it difficult even now to realize all I have lost. But I sorrow without repining, and with a feeling of calm submission to the Will which I am sure is best. If I can help it, I do not intend the old homestead to be gloomy and forbidding, through my selfish regrets. *She* would not have it so. She would wish it cheerful with the 'old familiar faces' of the friends whom she loved — and still loves. I hope thee and other friends will feel the same freedom to visit me as heretofore."

"The Vanishers" was the first poem written by Whittier after the death of his sister Elizabeth, and it was the poem which this sister's dearest friend, Lucy Larcom, chose to read at the memorial service held at the Whittier birthplace, soon after his death. This poem was sent to J. T. Fields, for insertion in the "Atlantic," in a letter dated Amesbury, 27th 9th mo., 1864: "I take the liberty of inclosing a little poem of mine

which has beguiled some weary hours. I hope thee will like it. How strange it seems not to read it to my sister! If thee have read Schoolcraft thee will remember what he says of the Puck-wud-jinnies, or 'Little Vanishers.'[1] The legend is very beautiful, and I hope I have done it justice in some sort."

In October, he wrote to Miss Larcom: "It is now four weeks since Lizzie left us. How much I have lived and thought in that time! . . . I want thee to feel that the old homestead door is always open to thee. I rode to Haverhill last week. It is very beautiful on the riverbanks now — not in their full glory yet, but giving splendid promise. The woods I find still have power to charm and soothe me. My health is better in some respects at the present time, but I cannot write. I busy myself with my garden, and the building of the new schoolhouse, as much as possible."

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

10th mo., 1864.

My dear sister's illness was painful and most distressing, yet she was patient, loving, and cheerful even to the last. How much I miss her! how much less I have now to live for. But she is at

[1] See Schoolcraft's *History, Condition, and Prospects of the American Indians*, published by Wanza, Foot and Co., Rochester, 1851, pp. 122 and 123. The chapter on Indian mythology contains "The Legends of Iagou," by Mrs. E. Oakes Smith, in which reference is made to the Puck-wud-jinnies, — literally, "little men who vanish," — who watched Chemanitou as he amused himself making various creatures, taking back the life he gave them, if they did not appear to be of so much use in the world and so attractive as the "Little Vanishers."

rest; surely, few needed it or deserved it more, if it were proper to speak of *desert* in that connection. A pure, generous, loving spirit was hers. I shall love all her friends better for her sake. The autumn woods are exceedingly beautiful at this time. I miss dear Elizabeth to enjoy them with me, but even now I realize the truth of Keats' line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and I am thankful that I can still find peace in communion with outward nature in this season of glory and beauty. I wonder sometimes that I can be cheerful and attend to my daily duties, since life has lost so much of its object. But I have still many blessings, — kind friends and books, and the faith that God is good, and good only.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

11th mo., 29, 1864.

I trust thee will be pleased with the inclosed photograph [of Elizabeth]. It was taken ten years ago. Elizabeth did not think it good. She disliked the appearance of the dress or attitude, I think. It was a daguerreotype and makes a good photograph. To me, at least, it is invaluable. I rejoice in it exceedingly. I shall go to Boston the last of the week to be present at the electoral college next Third day. I have just written a prose story[1] for the "Young Folks."

Mr. Whittier's acquaintance with Lucy Larcom began during his residence in Lowell, in 1844. She was at that time employed in the mills, and

[1] *David Matson, the Lost Man.*

had developed a literary taste and capacity which had brought her into notice as one of the leading contributors to the "Lowell Offering," a magazine that was attracting much attention, not only in this country, but abroad, as a successful venture in literature by factory operatives. Mr. Whittier assisted and encouraged her, and interested his mother and sister in her behalf. She soon became the dearest friend of Elizabeth Whittier, and was a frequent visitor at the home in Amesbury, receiving the heartiest welcome from each member of the family. In a letter of Elizabeth's, among the papers of Mr. Whittier, is found this sentence: "It seems to me that a new grace has ripened in Lucy every time I see her." In the extracts from Mr. Whittier's letters, it will be seen that the fact of Elizabeth's dear love for her was a constant incentive to kind words and deeds in her behalf. All his life he was thoughtful for her welfare, and helped in every way in which he could render assistance. When Elizabeth passed away, it was Miss Larcom who solaced the heart of the bereaved brother by procuring the admirable portrait of her friend, which has ever since hung in the parlor at Amesbury, opposite the gracious portrait of the mother. These two pictures were to Mr. Whittier the dearest of his earthly possessions, in the long years of his separation from the saintly women they represented. If a fire threatened his dwelling, his first thought was to save these treasures. He wished, in case Miss Larcom survived him, that she should have the portrait of Elizabeth, but she declined to have it removed, preferring it

should remain in the room it had so long consecrated.

In a biographical sketch, which forms the introduction to the "Letters of Lydia Maria Child," Mr. Whittier has shown how her noble "Appeal" closed to her the doors of literary success which had previously been thrown wide open for her. His words are so fully applicable to his own case as to be worth quoting. Mrs. Child and he had both entered upon literary careers of great promise, when at the call of duty they gave up the popularity they had won, and encountered prejudice and hatred they might easily have avoided. Of Mrs. Child he says in this "Introduction," written in 1883: "It is quite impossible for any one of the present generation to imagine the popular surprise and indignation which the book called forth, or how entirely its author cut herself off from the favor and sympathy of a large number of those who had previously delighted to do her honor. Social and literary circles, which had been proud of her presence, closed their doors against her. The sale of her books, the subscriptions to her magazine, fell off to a ruinous extent. She knew all she was hazarding, and made the great sacrifice, prepared for all the consequences that followed. . . . It is not exaggeration to say that no man or woman of that period rendered more substantial service to the cause of freedom, or made such a great renunciation in doing it."

Every word of this generous tribute applies, as the reader will see, to the precisely similar case of him who wrote it. The warm, steady, and lasting

friendship that existed between Mrs. Child and Mr. Whittier is explained by this hard experience through which they both passed at the same time.

TO LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

15th, 11th mo., 1864.

Thy beautiful book[1] and kind letter reached me a few days ago, and my heart has been thanking thee ever since. It was an exceedingly happy thought of thine to send out these words of cheer to those of us who are beginning to pass down life's sunset declivities. I do not like, however, to have thee call thyself old. I never think of thee as such. Where the heart and fancy are still young, why should we recur to family registers? . . . I am thinking how much my sister would have liked thy book. How strange and terrible are these separations — this utter silence — this deep agony of mystery — this reaching out for the love which we feel must be ever living, but which gives us no sign! Ah, my friend! What is there for us but to hold faster and firmer our faith in the goodness of God? that all which He allots to us or our friends is for the best! — best for them, for us, for all. Let theology, and hate, and bigotry talk as they will, I for one will hold fast to this, God *is* good; He *is* our Father! He knows what love is, what our hearts, sore and bereaved, long for, and He will not leave us comfortless, for is He not Love? . . . What a glorious result is the late election! My heart has anticipated Governor Andrew's proclamation, and kept the Thanksgiving ever since. . . . I saw the

[1] *Looking toward Sunset.*

bust of Colonel Shaw that thee spoke to me of at the colored fair. It struck me as excellent. I am not, perhaps, a judge of such matters, but it seems to me it is a success. Give my love to thy husband. Let me congratulate him on the prospect of seeing the end of slavery, for which he has so long labored.

TO HARRIET MCEWEN KIMBALL.

12th mo., 20, 1864.

Thy little book lies handy on my desk, and I love to turn to it. It is devotional without cant, pure without any lack of beauty and adornment. To me it is better than anything of Vaughn or Herbert, excepting a very few pieces of the latter. Thee ought to be very happy to have written so little and so well. . . . It has been my lot to see and hear of a great deal of misery among my married acquaintances and friends. As for bachelors and single sisters, they "die and make no sign" if they are miserable. . . . I have just received from Charles Sumner's sister the verde antique statuette of Hercules which used to stand on his centre table.

In the presidential campaign of 1864, the renomination of Lincoln did not at first receive the unanimous approval of his party. There was a large body of Republicans, particularly among the Germans of the West, and the more radical anti-slavery men at the East, who desired to support such a man as Frémont, who it was felt had been badly treated by the administration. The chair-

man of the Republican national committee, in this emergency, made a personal appeal to Frémont to stand aside, promising political preferment to his friends and the removal from office of his enemies. Frémont was not affected by appeals of this nature, but finally decided to give up his candidacy, a principal motive of this action being a message he received from Mr. Whittier, reference to which is made in the following extract from a letter written by Mrs. Frémont in November, 1889: —

"Among the words I remember from you are: 'There is a time to *do*, and a time to *stand aside*.' I never forgot your saying this to me at our Nahant cottage (in 1864), where you had come to say them to Mr. Frémont. Wendell Phillips, who saw the 'do' more clearly than the 'stand aside,' insisted I had dreamed your visit. 'Whittier goes nowhere — he *never* visits — his health does not let him,' and other laughing arguments against your wise and necessary view of what the time demanded of Mr. Frémont — to renounce self for the good of the greater number. Do you not remember it, too? It was a deciding word coming from you. And how we have outlived all of that time!"

As the demand for his books gradually increased, his publishers were induced to offer him a larger percentage on the sales, and Mr. Whittier wrote this note of thanks: "I gladly accept thy liberal offer, and only hope the public will make the arrangement one of mutual profit. At any rate, I should be sorry if I thought my gain would be at your expense as publishers. You have always dealt with me better than I deserved."

"The Mantle of St. John de Matha" was sent to Mr. Fields, in 1864, with the following note: "Is the inclosed a true ballad? I often sadly mistake about my pieces, but the feeling of this seems to be genuine, whatever the expression of it may be. I hope thee will like it, and that it may be thought worthy of a place in the New Year 'Atlantic.'"

When "The Changeling" was sent in 1865, Whittier wrote: "Some time I hope to be able to add a third volume, which will be a sort of history of the anti-slavery movement for the last thirty years. I send a poem which I hope is good. I am not sure; but I have bestowed some pains upon it, and it seems as near right as I can make it. . . . It is a great thing to live in these days. I am thankful for what I have lived to see and hear."

The poem "Laus Deo!" was suggested to Mr. Whittier as he sat in the Friends' meeting-house in Amesbury, and listened to the bells and the cannon which were proclaiming the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery, in 1865. It was the regular Fifth day meeting, and as the Friends sat in silence, their hearts responded to the joy that filled all the outside air: —

"It is done!
Clang of bell and roar of gun
Send the tidings up and down.
How the belfries rock and reel!
How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!

"Let us kneel:
God's own voice is in that peal,
And this spot is holy ground.

> Lord, forgive us! What are we,
> That our eyes this glory see,
> That our ears have heard the sound?"

When he returned to his home, he recited these passages, which had not yet been committed to paper, to the family sitting in the "garden room." He had given thirty years of his life to bring about this event, and his whole heart went out in praise to God, who had

> "smitten with his thunder
> The iron walls asunder."

This poem was first published in the "Independent," of February 9, 1865, and it is referred to in a letter to Lucy Larcom, under date of 2d mo., 1865: "I am glad thee like my poem in the 'Independent.' It wrote itself, or rather sang itself, while the bells rang."

The following extract is from a letter to Robert C. Waterston, read at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, called to pay a tribute to the memory of Edward Everett: —

"When I last met him as my colleague in the Electoral College of Massachusetts, his look of health and vigor seemed to promise us many years of his wisdom and usefulness. On greeting him, I felt impelled to express my admiration and grateful appreciation of his patriotic labors, but I shall never forget how readily he turned attention from himself to the great cause in which we had a common interest, and expressed his thankfulness to God that we had still a country to serve. To keep green the memory of such a man is at once a privilege and a duty. That stainless life of seventy

years is a priceless legacy. His hands were pure; the shadow of suspicion never fell on him. If he erred in his opinions, no selfish interest weighed in the scale of his judgment against the truth. As our thoughts follow him to his last quiet resting-place, we are sadly reminded of his own touching lines written many years ago at Florence. The name he has left behind is none the less 'pure' that instead of being a 'humble' one, as he then anticipated, it is on the lips of grateful millions, and written in ineffaceable letters on the record of his country's trial and triumph: —

> "'Yet not for me, when I shall fall asleep,
> Shall Santa Croce's lamps their vigils keep.
> Beyond the main, in Auburn's quiet shade,
> With those I loved and love my couch be made;
> Spring's pendent branches o'er the hillock wave,
> And morning's dewdrops glisten on my grave;
> While Heaven's great arch shall rise above my bed,
> When Santa Croce's crumbles on her dead;
> Unknown to erring or to suffering fame,
> So I may leave a pure though humble name!'"

In March, 1865, Mrs. Child sent him her three volumes on the "Progress of Religious Ideas;" it was at the time when there was some anxiety about Andrew Johnson's course as Vice-President, and Mr. Whittier referred to that and to the policy of reconstruction: "I do not know when I have been so pleased as when I opened the express package and found thy three volumes. We have them in our Library, but I did not own them, and I am more than glad to have them at hand for their own sake, as well as a memorial of our friendship. I hope to be able to send thee something of mine ere-

long. . . . I am more and more inclined to think we have got a strong man in Andrew Johnson; he has a good deal of the old Jackson strength of will. There is no fear that slavery is not to be utterly annihilated, and ground into powder under his heel. What I fear is that he is not quite democratic enough to give the black man the suffrage, or rather give his aid and influence in that direction. But the safety of the negro is in the fact, more and more apparent, that there is no possibility of a safe reconstruction of the States without his vote. This will be perceived; and we shall be compelled, as a matter of self-interest, to do justice to the loyal black man. . . . I am glad to know thy views about capital punishment. I almost feared that like some other of my friends the events of the last four years had changed thy views. I hope we shall have no unnecessary hanging to gratify an evil desire for revenge."

When the war was over, Mr. Whittier, as might be expected, took a lively interest in the questions growing out of the necessary readjustment of the affairs of the States which had made an unsuccessful attempt to secede. In June, 1865, a meeting was held in Faneuil Hall to consider plans for reconstruction. Mr. Whittier was one of the vice-presidents of this meeting, and was placed on the committee to prepare an address "to the people of the United States." Richard H. Dana, Jr., was chairman of this committee, and the other members were Theophilus Parsons, Charles G. Loring, Jacob M. Manning, Samuel G. Howe, George L. Stearns, and William Endicott, Jr. The address

published by them was a temperate and well-considered paper, demanding that the principle must be put beyond all question that the Republic "has a direct claim upon the allegiance of every citizen, from which no State can absolve him; that the system of slavery must be abolished by paramount and irreversible law; and that the systems of the States must be truly republican." In the preliminary statement of this address it is said that "in the arrangement with General Weitzel at Richmond, and in the Sherman-Johnston pacification, our government barely escaped a serious if not a fatal political defeat, at the hands of a vanquished enemy." The address was sent by Mr. Stearns to Mr. Whittier for his signature, and this was his reply, dated 3d 7th mo., 1865: —

"I have carefully looked over the 'Faneuil Hall Address,' and find it all I could wish. I can cheerfully sign it. I noted but one sentence which caused me any hesitation. I allude to that which speaks of Generals Weitzel and Sherman. I would prefer that no name should be mentioned in that connection. Our object is to persuade our fellow-citizens that in the matter of the Freedmen, justice and expediency, duty and interest, point in one direction. We should be careful, I think, to avoid giving offense to the friends and admirers of Sherman or any other popular general. But perhaps my objection is not of sufficient importance to cause any change in the address. I am ready to sign it as it is. God grant that it may be instrumental in saving us from the sin and shame of a reconstruction which shall at the same time give

a premium to rebellion in the increase of political power, and punish loyalty with outlawry."

Not long after the close of the civil war, a small but heavy box came by express from Chattanooga to the poet's home in Amesbury. When the cover was removed a peculiar array of iron points was visible, and his niece called in alarm: "Oh, Uncle Greenleaf, don't touch it! It is some dreadful explosive thing those Southerners have sent to kill you! Don't touch it!" It was decided to bury the dangerous machine in the garden. The next day's mail brought a letter from a friend saying he had sent a paperweight quaintly modeled from Northern and Southern minie bullets, picked up on the battle-field of Lookout Mountain. From its ignominious burial it was resurrected to a post of honor on the poet's desk in the "garden room," where it remained until after he passed away, when it was given to Mr. Houghton, his publisher.

CHAPTER XI.

"SNOW-BOUND," "THE TENT ON THE BEACH," AND "AMONG THE HILLS."

1865–1870.

"SNOW-BOUND" was written after two persons had passed away whom Mr. Whittier loved devotedly, — his mother and his sister. In one sense, the poem is a memorial of them, and as he could not dissociate them from his home life, the poem became a narrative of his early days in Haverhill. The first intimation of the poem is found in a note to Fields, dated August 28, 1865: "I am writing a poem, 'Snow-Bound, a Winter Idyl,' a homely picture of old New England homes. If I ever finish, I hope and trust it will be good." The manuscript of the poem was sent to Fields, October 3, 1865, with this letter: "I have thy note of this date. In answer I send 'Snow-Bound' to do with as seemeth best in thy sight. I shall see some things wrong when I get the proof, — as it is now I cannot do much more with it, owing to illness. I think thee will like some parts of the conclusion. The portrait of that strange pilgrim, Harriet Livermore, the erratic daughter of Judge Livermore of New Hampshire, who used to visit us, is as near the life as I can give it."

Mr. Fields, in returning the proof-sheets, made some suggestions, and Mr. Whittier wrote: "I thank thee for looking over my poem. I have acted as well as I could on thy hints, but I have left one 'bad rhyme,' *heard* and *word*, to preserve my well-known character in that respect. I don't know about the portrait. At first thought, it strikes me that it would be rather out of place at the head of a new venture in rhyme. I don't want to run the risk of being laughed at. However, do as thee likes about it. Put thyself in the place of Mrs. Grundy, and see if it will be safe for any 'counterfeit presentment' to brave the old lady's criticism. I think I have not injured the piece by my alterations, — that on the second page of the proof is rather improved than otherwise; and I have added two lines [1] to my slightly *lackadaisical* reference to the boys and girls, in road-breaking. Don't send the poem to me again. I shall tear it all to pieces with alterations, if thee do. In the picture of the old home, the rim of hemlocks, etc., at the foot of the high hill which rises abruptly to the left, is not seen. They would make a far better snow picture than the oaks which are in the view. Don't put the poem on tinted or fancy paper. Let it be white as the snow it tells of."

These are the changes made in the proof-sheets, returned in November, 1865: —

[1] These lines were: —

> "And reading in each missive tost
> The charm with Eden never lost."

1. I cannot alter the phrase "mindless wind" to suit me. Let it pass.

2. "They sat the clean-winged hearth about."

[Afterwards changed to "We sat," etc. Probably Mr. Fields called attention to the phrase for which "clean-winged" is substituted.]

3. "Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot."

[The line for which this is substituted does not appear in his letter.]

4. "Womanly atmosphere" must be allowed to pass.

5. "The woodchuck like a hermit gray
Peered from the doorway of his cell"

[is substituted for]

"The woodchuck in his robes of gray
Peered like a hermit from his cell."

6. "He played the old and simple games
Our modern boyhood scarcely names."

[In a subsequent revision this couplet is omitted, or enlarged as it now appears in the sketch of the schoolmaster. The poet finally decided to give the names of some of the games.]

7. "Or held the good dame's winding-yarn."

[We do not find the line for which this is substituted.]

8. "That none might lack, that bitter night."

[These alternatives are given:]

"That none might lack, on such a night."
"That none might lack, through such a night."

I prefer the original; it is better and clearer, in spite of the two *thats* — but take thy way. [Mr. Whittier's way was finally taken.]

9. I should alter the conclusion thus: —

> "Like the odors blown
> From unseen meadows newly mown,
> Or lilies floating in some pond,
> Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
> The traveler feels the grateful sense
> Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
> And, pausing, owns with forehead bare
> The benediction of the air."

[In the fifth line the word "feels" is changed to "owns," and in the seventh "takes" is substituted for "owns." Mr. Whittier adds:]

I am glad thee called my attention to the inclosed lines, for I think I have made a good change.

Again he writes: "I have been looking over the proof of 'Snow-Bound,' and I now quite agree with thee and Annie F., that the poem is (though I say it who should n't) good. If the public don't see it, so much the worse for the public. I have added three or four pages, perhaps, and will send it back whenever thee want it. I wish it could come out in season for winter fireside reading — the very season for it. . . . I shall dedicate it to my brother, and shall occupy one page with quotations from Cor. Agrippa, and from Emerson's 'Snow Storm.' . . . I like the page and type very much."

This letter about "Snow-Bound" was written to Lucy Larcom, October 9, 1865: "I wanted to answer thy last letter right off, and send my MS. of 'Snow-Bound,' but I was sick, and the poem was in fragments, and I did not like to send it in such a shape. I *have* sent it, however, to Fields,

and he likes it so much that he means to make a book of it, some time or other, with illustrations by Darley. It is a winter idyl — a picture of an old-fashioned farmer's fireside in winter — and if it were not mine I should call it pretty good. [Mr. Whittier had written thus far, when he was called away, and a month later he finished his letter as follows:] 10th 11th mo. So far I had written when I went to Boston, and met thee at Ticknor & Fields's. I have since received a line from thee at Hartford. . . . My little poem will *not* be illustrated — only a view of the old farmhouse in a snowstorm, copied from a photograph. When it will appear I cannot say. Would n't the dog days be a suitable season for it?"

On the 3d of November he wrote to Fields: "Is it too late to make a slight alteration in my poem? Near its close, on the 45th page, I think, the passage which reads thus: —

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law, etc.,

I would like to change to

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
> Haply the watchful young men saw
> Sweet doorway pictures, etc.

This will omit two lines. If the omission will be difficult, let the whole passage read as follows:

> "Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
> The fond constraint which none elude,
> Life's zest and pleased disquietude,
> Haply the watchful young men saw
> Sweet doorway pictures, etc.

If the change cannot be made,[1] don't trouble thyself to answer my note."

[1] The change was made; the two lines, whatever they may

Those who have editions of "Snow-Bound" printed before 1875 will find the phrase "Pindus-born Araxes," which has since been changed to "Pindus-born Aracthus," as in that year Mr. Whittier found that the similarity of names had misled him. It was the Aracthus he had in mind when the poem was written. Another error, more obvious, persistently held its place in the poem, through every successive edition, from 1866 to 1893: —

"The wedding *knell* and dirge of death."

It was written "wedding *bell*." Mr. Whittier's attention was called to it several years ago, and he said he would have it corrected in the next edition. It was corrected in the Artists' Edition, but in no other. He frequently received letters from teachers and students in schools where his poems were being critically studied. A school girl in a Western State wrote to say that there was a dispute in her class about a passage in "Snow-Bound." They did not see how the snow could form a Chinese roof over the well if there was a sweep. One of the class suggested there might be two wells, one covered with a roof and the other open; but as that seemed very improbable, the writer ventured to appeal to the poet for an explanation, and the tone of her letter indicated that she could not see any possible way out of the difficulty. Mr. Whittier replied that there was no roof over the curb; it was all open, except that on one side a board was laid over the curb, forming a shelf.

have been, were omitted, and the two here suggested were not used. It was a pity to throw them away.

The snow was sometimes piled upon this shelf in fantastic shapes, giving the idea of a Chinese roof.

"Painful Sewel's ancient tome," mentioned in the sketch of his mother, is the "History of the Christian People called Quakers," by William Sewel, a Dutchman. The name is not correctly spelled except in late editions of "Snow-Bound." Sewel was born in Amsterdam and was of English extraction. He died about 1725, having spent twenty-five years of his old age in collecting the materials for his history. It was originally written in Low Dutch, and was translated into English by Sewel himself, who dedicated his work to George I. It is devoted mostly to the story of the persecutions of the Friends in Great Britain and in America. Many instances are related of swift retribution that came upon the persecutors of the Quakers. An American edition was published in Philadelphia in 1823, in two volumes of about six hundred pages each, and it was this edition which was in the library of Mr. Whittier's father, and was referred to in the poem.

While at Sturtivant's Farm, in the summer of 1888, Mrs. Anthony, of Providence, showed Mr. Whittier a copy of the first edition of "Snow-Bound." He took the book, and wrote these lines on a fly-leaf: —

> "Twenty years have taken flight
> Since these pages saw the light.
> All home-loves are gone;
> But not all with sadness still
> Do the eyes of memory fill
> As I gaze thereon.

"Lone and weary life seemed, when
First these pictures of the pen
Grew upon my page,
But I still have loving friends,
And the peace our Father sends
Cheers the heart of age."

Mr. Whittier's share in the profits of the first issue of "Snow-Bound" amounted to ten thousand dollars, a success which greatly surprised him; but there was always mingled with the surprise and pleasure of the competence that had come to him so unexpectedly, the regret that his mother and sister had passed away without enjoying the added comforts and luxuries it was now in his power to supply. Besides the great break in his home which seems immediately to have given rise to this poem, the close of the long period of struggle with the slave power undoubtedly affected him by giving a rebound to the more peaceful movements of his nature. The years from 1832 to 1865 had been the years of his greatest mental activity. Besides his extensive correspondence and prose writings, he wrote during this period nearly three hundred poems, more than a third of which bore directly or indirectly upon the subject of slavery.

Some other American poets, even those who had written bravely against the system of slavery, consented to leave out of their collected works such poems as would be offensive to their Southern readers. Whittier never made this concession to popular prejudice, and issued no edition of his works that did not present him as an uncompromising foe of slavery. But it was easy to see that

his enmity to the institution did not extend to individual slaveholders. All his life he numbered among his personal friends not only apologists for slavery, but slaveholders themselves. In replying to the charge of a Southern paper that he was an enemy of the South, he once wrote to a friend: — "I was never an enemy to the South or the holders of slaves. I inherited from my Quaker ancestry hatred of slavery, but not of slaveholders. To every call of suffering or distress in the South I have promptly responded to the extent of my ability. I was one of the very first to recognize the rare gift of the Carolinian poet Timrod, and I was the intimate friend of the lamented Paul H. Hayne, though both wrote fiery lyrics against the North. I am sure no one rejoices more heartily than I do at the prosperity of the Southern States."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

1st mo., 27, 1866.

My book, I think, will be out in a month or so, and I am busy with proof. Elizabeth's picture came safely last night, and I am happy in its possession. I cannot tell thee how glad I am, nor how deeply I appreciate the delicate kindness of the gift. I shall never see it without a grateful recognition of the giver. The more I look at it, the more striking seems the likeness. It seems to me that it could not be better; pray tell the artist how well satisfied I am. Apart from the likeness, it is really a fine work of art. It gives Elizabeth's best expression, such as I so often have seen, when she was comparatively well and happy.

TO THE SAME.

2d mo., 7, 1866.

I may be in Boston erelong; but it is too cold now to leave home. See all the pretty things thee can in Boston — go to the picture shops — peep in at all the gay windows, and make the most of thy opportunity. I always do, and should like to be there and help thee.

TO THE SAME.

2d mo., 27, 1866.

I am glad thee found "Snow-Bound" as good as thee expected. I see now a great many faults; but I defer after all to the better judgment of my friends. They tell me it is all right, and I shut my eyes and make myself believe it.

TO THE SAME.

25th 3d mo., 1866.

Believe me, Lucy Larcom, it gives me real sorrow
That I cannot take my carpet-bag and go to town to-morrow;
But I 'm "snow-bound," and cold on cold like layers of an onion
Have piled my back and weighed me down as with the pack of Bunyan.
The northeast wind is damper and the northwest wind is colder,
Or else the matter simply is that I am growing older.
And then I dare not trust a moon seen over one's left shoulder,
As I saw this with slender horns caught in a west hill pine,
As on a Stamboul minaret curves the arch-impostor's sign, —
So I must stay in Amesbury, and let you go your way,
And guess what colors greet your eyes, what shapes your steps delay;
What pictured forms of heathen lore, of god and goddess please you,
What idol graven images you bend your wicked knees to.
But why should I of evil dream, well knowing at your head goes
That flower of Christian womanhood, our dear good Anna Meadows.

She 'll be discreet, I 'm sure, although once in a freak romantic
She flung the Doge's bridal ring and married "The Atlantic."
And, spite of all appearances, like the woman in a shoe
She 's got so many "Young Folks"[1] now, she don't know what to do.
But I must say I think it strange that thee and Mrs. Spaulding,
Whose lives with Calvin's five-railed creed have been so tightly walled in,
Should quit your Puritan homes, and take the pains to go
So far, with malice aforethought, to "walk in a vain show!"
Did Emmons hunt for pictures? Was Jonathan Edwards peeping
Into the chambers of imagery with maids for Thormuz weeping?
Ah well! the times are sadly changed, and I myself am feeling
The wicked world my Quaker coat from off my shoulders peeling.
God grant that in the strange new sea of change wherein we swim,
We still may keep the good old plank, of simple faith in Him!

The following letter to his friend, Margaret Burleigh, was written before the full success of "Snow-Bound" had become evident: —

AMESBURY, 14th 7th mo., 1866.

I thank thee for thy kind note of congratulation upon my supposed riches. I only wish I could make out a better case for it. I *have* been favored more than I ever dreamed of, however. "Snow-Bound" has given or will give me about $2000, and my little speculation of $300 has given me $1200. This, with what I had before, enables me to meet the extra expenses of living in these times, and to send my niece to Ipswich Seminary, leaving me about $100 a year for charities, but with nothing for superfluities. So that I am satisfied — more would only be burdensome, as it is now too late for me to make a display with money, or at-

[1] *Our Young Folks*, as well as the *Atlantic*, was published by Fields, Osgood & Co., and Miss Larcom was editing the juvenile magazine.

tempt a fast life. When it pleases the Lord to call me, I shall leave little to quarrel about among my relatives. If my health allowed me to write I could make money easily now, as my anti-slavery reputation does not injure me in the least, at the present time. For twenty years I was shut out from the favor of booksellers and magazine editors, but I was enabled by rigid economy to live in spite of them — and to see the end of the infernal institution which proscribed me. Thank God for it.

In the three years that had elapsed since the publication of the last collection of Whittier's poems, "In War Time," he had written several popular ballads which he was prepared to string together upon the light thread of a summer story, adding some hitherto unpublished poems, with the title of "The Tent on the Beach." He was delayed by ill health, and to an inquiry from Fields as to the progress he had made, he replied, August 18, 1866: "The 'Tent on the Beach' is not pitched yet — nay more, the very cloth of it is not woven. All this summer I have been utterly unable to do anything of the kind; and I sometimes fear I shall have to give it up altogether. It is out of the question for this season. I am *so* sorry, for I meant to have made it better than 'Snow-Bound.' It is rather a hard dispensation of Providence, but I dare say it is all for the best — there is, sooner or later, an end of all things — even of bad poetry. It is beautiful weather now — such as used to make me stronger — but somehow it does not have its old-time effect."

On the 30th of September, 1866, he inclosed his poem "Our Master," with this note, to Mr. Fields: "I inclose for Annie Fields a poem of mine which has never seen the light. It presents my view of Christ as the special manifestation of the Love of God to humanity. . . . Let me thank the publishers of 'Milton's Prose,' for the great compliment of the dedication. Milton's prose has long been my favorite reading. My whole life has felt the influence of his writings. . . . I fear I can make no promise of the prose story thee ask for. I am forbidden to use my poor head at present — so I have to get along as I can without it. St. Leon, thee knows, walked about as usual after his head was cut off."

A two-volume edition of his prose works was published in 1866. The reference is to this in the following note, dated October 30, 1866: "The prose volumes are admirable — too good, I fear. Nobody, I am afraid, will buy them; but it is a satisfaction to see one's thoughts so nicely dressed up, at any rate. . . . Am glad to see 'Hosea Biglow' in book form. It is a great book — the best of its kind for the last half century or more. It has wit enough to make the reputation of a dozen modern English satirists."

His next letter to Fields about the "Tent" was written December 28, and was sent with the copy of his completed work: "I send thee the MS. of the 'Tent on the Beach' — too badly written to read, I fear. If it ever gets into type it will seem better than in its present state. Tell me candidly if thee object to the *personal* charac-

ter of it. I have represented thee, Bayard Taylor, and myself, living a wild tent life for a few summer days on the beach, where for lack of something better I read my stories to [you]. My original plan was the old Decameron one — each person to read his own poems; but the thing has been so hackneyed by repetition that I abandoned it in disgust, and began anew. The result is before thee. Put it in type or on the fire, I am content, like Eugene Aram, 'prepared for either fortune.' Thee must get some of thy clerks to fish up the ballads, which are all in the 'Atlantic,' and see how the thing looks with them. The scene of the poem is Salisbury Beach as it was half a dozen years ago. I am sorry to send so bad a copy, but my head will not allow me to re-write it. When it gets in type, if it ever does, we shall see what it looks like. It is too short, but I am not disposed to make it longer. With the poems to be added it will make almost a book by itself."

Fields at once reported his satisfaction with the work, and Whittier wrote, January 2, 1867: "I am delighted to know that thee do not take in dudgeon my free use of thee; and I am glad thee like the poem as a whole. I shall make it better if I can get it in type. It is better than 'Snow-Bound' now. . . . I inclose a fragment which I like. It goes in after 'Kallundborg Church.'"

Fields desired immediate publication, and Whittier wrote, January 6: "I am rather surprised by the announcement that the 'Tent' must be pitched in midwinter; but it may be best, and I shall be glad to have it done and off my mind.

. . . I am in doubt about the 'Peace Autumn,' compared with the 'Battle Autumn.' It is hardly up to the mark."

On the 1st of February, he wrote: "I am glad to know that the 'Tent' is set up. Bayard Taylor sails for Europe on the 9th. I wish it were possible for thee to send him the sheets of the 'Tent' before he leaves. Do so, if it can be done without too much trouble."

On the same day he had written to Taylor: "I must ask Fields to send thee the proof-sheets of 'The Tent on the Beach'; and I here beg pardon for the friendly license of using thee as one of the imaginary trio on the seashore. I hope neither thee nor Marie will think I have got thee into bad company. And now, dear friend, dear to me, not on my own account alone, but on that of my dear mother and sister, who loved thee so well, may God bless and keep thee and thine during your European sojourn, and bring you safe back to the quiet of Cedarcroft. . . . Thy 'St. John' is a poem for poets and painters."

The song referred to by Whittier in the following note to Fields was "The Worship of Nature," a poem[1] which had been lying in his portfolio for several years: "I send thee a song to be inserted in the place I have indicated in the proof-sheet, as a substitute for the verse commencing 'The tent was still,' etc. Of course, it will delay your

[1] The germ of this poem is to be found in verses with the same title, "The Worship of Nature," written by Whittier while in his teens, which were published in the Haverhill *Gazette*, Oct. 5, 1827.

printer and be a bother to you; but it is good, though I say it who should n't, and it must not be lost. For the future all will go on smoothly. I have bridged over the *shaky* place in the poem, and shall make no more serious alterations or additions. I hope thee will like the song as well as I do."

On the next day he wrote: "I see little to amend or alter. I see no great harm in two words so common and insignificant as 'well' in the same verse. Let them slide. I sent yesterday something of an addition. If it is not best in thy opinion, omit it — that is to say, the song — and in the proof I can make the by-talk all right. But I rather liked it, though I have no definite idea of it. I shall not meddle further with the poem, and the proofs will come back without much change for the future."

To an inquiry about "The Maids of Attitash," he replied: "It is At-ti-tash — Indian name for huckleberry — the name of a pond or lake in Amesbury, which sometime I would be glad to show thee, as it is pretty as St. Mary's lake, which Wordsworth sings, — in fact a great deal prettier. The glimpse of the Pawtuckaway range of mountains in Nottingham seen across it is very fine, and it has noble groves of pines and maples and ash-trees. I hope thee will have no further trouble with the poem. I am greatly obliged for thy suggestions always."

On another occasion he wrote: "See what thy good nature in sending me a proof has come to. I yield the rhyme of *martyr* and *water* to please

thee; but reluctantly, for it is no time now to give up our Yankee rights of pronunciation. I should be hung for my bad rhymes anywhere south of Mason and Dixon's line. My 'speech bewrayeth me.' . . . I have added a verse. You can crowd it into the page without disturbing your other pieces."

The four lines which follow the song beginning, "Her window opens to the bay," were an afterthought, and were added in the proof, as follows:

> "The sweet voice into silence went,
> A silence which was almost pain,
> As through it rolled the long lament,
> The cadence of the mournful main."

Instances of alliteration are of frequent occurrence in Whittier's writings. The principal of a Boston school once wrote to him inquiring if the alliterations in "The Wreck of Rivermouth" were made purposely, or unintentionally and spontaneously. This was his answer: "I am glad to be able to tell thee that I never, in that, or any other poem, consciously sought alliteration, and indeed was not aware of it in 'The Wreck of Rivermouth,' until my attention was called to it by thy letter."

The sweet and tender lines entitled "The Friend's Burial," which were written in 1873, allude to the funeral of his aged friend, Elizabeth Gove, of Seabrook, N. H.

The story of "The Dead Ship of Harpswell" came to Mr. Whittier from Miss Marion Pearl (now Mrs. Charles Selmar), who then resided in the vicinity of the scene of the legend. A pun-

ning reference to her name is made in the introduction to the ballad, in "The Tent on the Beach": —

> "Here, . . .
> Is something I found last year
> Down on the island known as Orr's.
> I had it from a fair-haired girl
> Who, oddly, bore the name of Pearl,
> (As if by some droll freak of circumstance,)
> Classic, or well-nigh so, in Harriet Stowe's romance."

Invited by Fields to pay him a visit at about the time the book was published, he replied: "Solitude as such has few charms for me. But I am and have been for many days unfit and unable to make any change. A miserable, inexorable headache engrosses me. I am a bundle of nerves for Pain to experiment upon, and I can think of nothing else until this subsides. I may as well be here as anywhere, since I should be neither useful nor ornamental, and I love my friends too well to inflict something which is not myself upon them."

To a note of Lucy Larcom's, commending "The Tent on the Beach," he replied: "Thanks for what thee say of my new book; but it don't convince me. I have had, and still have, misgivings about it. It never would have been written but for its premature announcement. I don't mean to be betrayed into a book again. As Emerson says, 'It is time to be old,' and thee knows that I have been 'venerable' for a long time; at any rate, I ought to have one of the privileges of age, exemption from labor and the 'making of books of which there is no end.' I wrote this, or dictated it, under

great disadvantages, and shall not blame the critics if they make a note of it."

On the 18th of February, he wrote to Fields: "The 'Tent' looks well; I like thy part of it. Mine, I see, needs some corrections and emendations. But if, as the 'Transcript' says, you have been foolish enough to print ten thousand copies, there will never be a chance for that. It will never come to a second edition. I hope there is some mistake about it; I should not like to see your shelves loaded down with unsold verses."

The event proved that there was no occasion for anxiety; for twenty thousand copies of the book were speedily sold, being called for at the rate of one thousand a day. On the 28th of February, Mr. Whittier wrote: "I got thy note last evening. Think of bagging in this 'tent' of ours an unsuspecting public at the rate of a thousand a day! This will never do. The swindle is awful. Barnum is a saint to us. I am bowed with a sense of guilt, ashamed to look an honest man in the face. But Nemesis is on our track; somebody will puncture our 'tent' yet, and it will collapse like a torn balloon. I know I shall have to catch it; my back tingles in anticipation. If a promise of never doing such a thing again would avail, I am more than ready to make it. . . . I thank thee for H. W. L.'s note, and thank him for his kind word and invitation. I would accept the last if I were in a bodily condition to do it."

Mr. E. L. Godkin, editor of the "Nation,"

having quoted the passage in "The Tent on the Beach," in which Mr. Whittier referred to his editorial work, as indicating that he had a low estimate of his work in journalism,[1] the poet wrote as follows to Mr. Godkin: —

"In the half playful lines, if I did not feel at liberty to boast of my anti-slavery labors and to magnify my editorial profession, I certainly did not mean to underrate them or to express the shadow of a regret that they had occupied so large a share of my time and thought. The simple fact is that I cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Divine Providence that so early called my attention to the great interests of humanity, saving me from the poor ambitions and miserable jealousies of a selfish pursuit of literary reputation. Up to a comparatively recent period my writings have been simply episodical, something apart from the real object and aim of my life; and whatever favor they have found with the public has come to me as a grateful surprise rather than as an expected reward. As I have never staked all on the chances of authorship I have been spared the pain of disappointment and the temptation to envy those who, as men of letters, occupy a higher place in the public estimation than I have ever aspired to."

[1] "And one there was, a dreamer born,
Who, with a mission to fulfill,
Had left the Muses' haunts to turn
The crank of an opinion-mill,
Making his rustic reed of song
A weapon in the war with wrong."

BAYARD TAYLOR TO J. G. WHITTIER.

GOTHA, March 19, 1867.

Here in my German home, I take a leisure evening to tell how much I value the introduction into such a sedate company as are gathered together in the tent by the seaside. Of course, there was no difficulty in recognizing my companions. If my picture be drawn with an over-kindly and affectionate pencil, I would not change it if I could. The words which came to me like a "God-speed!" at parting still echo in my heart. It is a pleasant thought that our names should be thus connected, if only to prove to the world that there *may* be faithful friendship between poets. The surprise and delight made me happy for many days. . . . Marie and I spent a day and a half with Tennyson. He gave us a cordial welcome, and in the evening read to us his "Guinevere." He had Whittier, in blue and gold, on his writing-desk, and asked me a great many questions about the poet, which I was glad to answer. It seems that the success of "Snow-Bound" in England has recalled attention to your other poems. While I was in London, I was more than once asked where they could be had. My friend Graham sent a number of copies to English and Scotch authors.

One of the miscellaneous poems published in the volume with "The Tent on the Beach" was "The Common Question," which was suggested by the talk of Mr. Whittier's pet parrot, "Charlie." In a letter to Lucy Larcom, dated 2d mo., 7, 1866, he sends the poem, with the title of "The Bird's

Question," for insertion in "Our Young Folks,"[1] with the following explanation: "I have met with a real loss — poor Charlie is dead. He has gone where the good parrots go. He has been ailing and silent for some time, and he finally died. Don't laugh at me — but I am sorry enough to cry if it would do any good. He was an old friend; dear Lizzie liked him. And he was the heartiest, jolliest, pleasantest old fellow I ever saw. And speaking of him reminds me of a little verse I have had by me, suggested by one of his sayings. I inclose it. Perhaps it might fill a corner of 'Our Young Folks.' But I am by no means sure that it is fit for such a place."

Charlie used to perch on the back of his master's chair at meal-time, as is suggested in the poem. No bird or other pet was allowed to be permanently caged in the house. Charlie was a gray parrot, and when he came into the Quaker household had a full and rather profane vocabulary. Gradually, however, his habit of swearing wore away, and he fell into the quiet and decorous ways of the house. Occasionally, under excitement, he would have a relapse, fall from grace, and shock the neighborhood. One Sunday morning he climbed the lightning-rod, while the bells were ringing for meeting, and the street was full of church-goers, and having reached the chimney-top began to dance, and sing, and swear, to the mingled amusement and amazement of passers-by, and to the intense annoyance of the shocked household beneath, who could devise no way of stopping the bird's unholy frolic.

[1] It appeared in the number for June, 1866.

Charlie afterward danced on that chimney to his sorrow. He tumbled down a flue, and was not discovered and rescued for two days. He was missed, but it was thought some cat or dog had made way with him, although usually he could easily frighten away any animal that molested him. His powers of speech caused intense surprise on the part of animals which had not become accustomed to him. From the house-top he would sing out "Whoa!" and stop the horses in the street. When it was found that he was down the flue, although it was in the middle of the night, a man was sent for, who let down a pole with a cleat on it. As the weak and sooty bird was being drawn up, he responded feebly to the encouraging call of his master, and as he emerged, "Poor Charlie wants water," was his whisper. He never fully recovered his strength, and soon after died, and was buried in the garden. Charlie had the bad habit of nipping at the leg of a person whose trousers happened to be hitched above the top of the boot. One day Mr. Whittier was being worn out by a prosy harangue from a visitor, who sat in a rocking-chair and swayed back and forth as he talked. As he rocked, his trousers reached the point of danger, and Charlie noticed it as soon as did the poet, who now had something that interested him. Charlie sidled up, unseen by the orator; Mr. Whittier foresaw a sudden end of his harangue, and was not disappointed. There was a little nip, a sharp exclamation, and the thread of the discourse was broken! The relieved poet now had the floor as an apologist for his discourteous parrot. When

Charlie died, Mr. Whittier wrote to his niece, who was then away at school: "We buried poor Charlie decently in the snow-bank. If there is a parrot's paradise, he ought to go there. I miss him sadly — his jolly hallo! and droll whispers."

A little bantam rooster of bright plumage succeeded the parrot as a pet. He was often to be seen perched on the poet's shoulder, and liked to be buttoned up inside the Quaker coat. Whittier taught this bantam to wake up his young niece at the proper hour by his crowing. He would open her chamber door and put the little bird on top of it, where he stayed and crowed until his young mistress acknowledged she was awake.

The cats and dogs of the house were Whittier's especial pets, and he delighted in teasing them and teaching them droll tricks; this teasing propensity it seems was not exercised merely upon the animal pets of the household, but his mother and sister were sometimes its victims, as the following anecdote illustrates.

While attending a Quarterly Meeting at Amesbury many years ago, Sophronia Page, an eminent minister, was entertained by the Whittiers. On starting for her home in Danvers, before daybreak, she took Abigail Whittier's bonnet instead of her own. At that time every Quaker bonnet was like every other, as to the outward, and in the dim light she did not notice the name written in the crown. On reaching her home she discovered her mistake, and at once sent the bonnet with an explanatory note to Mr. Whittier. On reading the note, Mr. Whittier left the bandbox in the hall,

and seating himself beside his mother began to sigh and rub his brow, apparently in great distress of mind. His mother's anxiety was aroused at once. "Why, Greenleaf," said she, "what is the matter? Is thee ill?" "No, I am not ill," he replied, "but I am feeling very much troubled, very sad." "Tell me what has happened!" she exclaimed. He continued to sigh, and finally said, "Mother, I dread to tell thee, for it will shock and grieve thee so; it will make thee sick at heart." With increasing excitement she cried, "Don't keep me in suspense; tell me the worst at once!" With apparent effort and enforced calmness he said, "Mother, has thee heard from Sophronia Page since she left here?" "Why, no, has anything happened to her — is she sick?" "She is not sick," he replied, "and no ordinary thing has happened to her — it is worse than that — there is something terrible coming out against her — it will shake the Yearly Meeting!" At this time dissensions, which afterward culminated in a separation, were rife in the Society of Friends, and Abigail Whittier, thinking only of this threatening cloud, said: "What is thee talking about? I believe Sophronia Page is too well balanced to take any rash steps in the Society troubles. Don't keep me waiting any longer." "Well, mother, if thee must know, I will tell thee — Sophronia Page, incredible as it may seem, has been taking what does not belong to her." At this his mother's indignation was aroused, and she replied, "Greenleaf, I 'd have thee know that Sophronia Page is not a woman to make light jokes about. I don't

see any fun in such talk." To which he gravely replied: "Mother, this is no idle joke; I am telling the truth. Sophronia Page has been taking what does not belong to her. *Thee will have to believe it*, for she has begun to restore what she has taken!" He then produced the bonnet, and his mother said: "Greenleaf, if thee were twenty years younger, I would take thee over my knee!"

TO CELIA THAXTER.

15th 2d mo., 1867.

God has been very good to me. I sometimes think I am about the richest man in the world, not exactly in greenbacks and deeds of warranty, but in loves and friendships, and the dear sense of kind remembrances and wishes flowing in upon me, peopling loneliness with forms of beauty, and displacing silence with sweet sounds. Would I forego all this for a name on 'Change? By no means. I ought to be thankful to the dear Lord, and I trust I am. But it all seems so undeserved; the partial praise of my friends makes me feel like one whose credit outruns his capital. I don't want to obtain anything under false pretenses. . . . I thought after it was too late that it would have been so nice to have had thee stay till the next morning; and when the firelight flickered and danced on the walls in the evening twilight, I thought how pleasant it would be to have thee with us, warmed and glorified in that hearth-light. . . . I will send thee a copy of my little book ["The Tent on the Beach"] in a few days. There are some things

in it that I think thee will like. I wish thee would write out for the "Atlantic" some of the good things thee know of the Shoals and the Shoalers. I have never heard anything equal in dramatic effect to thy stories one evening in the parlor at Appledore.

Mrs. Thaxter contributes to these pages this interesting note of reminiscence of her long and intimate friendship with Mr. Whittier: —

I cannot express the pleasure I have had in knowing Mr. Whittier so intimately for so many years. Ever since the first time he came here to the Isles of Shoals with his dear sister, thirty years ago, and fixed me with those brilliant eyes of his as he quietly asked me, "Can thee tell me who wrote 'The Summer Day'?" we have had the most delightful friendship, and I miss him out of the world more than any words can say.

His sympathy and interest in all I did were invaluable to me. He never gave me any peace till I wrote the book about the Shoals. "It is thy kismet," he said; "thee *must* do it!"

Po Hill, in Amesbury, where he lived so long, is the last hill of any importance that marks our coast line toward the southwest from the Shoals, and I never looked across without thinking of him there in the pleasant years that are gone, and greeting him silently as a near and dear neighbor. "Po Hill sends Appledore good-morning," was a favorite way he had of beginning his letters. His very last letter to me, dated a year ago, said, "I

want to go to the Shoals once more, if possible, this summer." But when at last the crowd thinned toward autumn, and I wrote to him that a comfortable room was ready for him, he had gone out on an unknown sea upon a longer voyage, and I saw him no more. For the inestimable boon of his beautiful friendship I am profoundly grateful, as all must be to whom such a blessing was vouchsafed. Our correspondence continued from the first year of his coming here through the whole thirty years, and the sonnet[1] which I inclose was written the second summer, on his way home to Amesbury, as he left the Shoals.

CELIA THAXTER.

APPLEDORE, ISLES OF SHOALS,
June, 1893.

[1] "When we were just losing sight of Appledore the sun was in clouds and the sea all around dark, but the island itself lay, far off, steeped in warmest sunshine. Having nothing better to do, I thought of some rhymes, which I venture to send thee, only wishing I had something more graceful and beautiful to offer: —

"Under the shadow of a cloud, the light
Died out upon the waters, like a smile
Chased from a face by grief. Following the flight
Of a lone bird that, scudding with the breeze,
Dipped its crank wing in leaden-colored seas,
I saw in sunshine lifted, clear and bright,
On the horizon's rim the Fortunate Isle
That claims thee as its fair inhabitant,
And glad of heart I whispered, 'Be to her,
Bird of the summer sea, my messenger;
Tell her, if Heaven a fervent prayer will grant,
This light that falls her island home above
Making its slopes of rock and greenness gay,
A partial glory midst surrounding gray,
Shall prove an earnest of our Father's love,
More and more shining to the perfect day.'"

J. G. W.

There was a rumor abroad early in 1867 that Mr. Whittier was about to marry. He refers to this in his letter to Lucy Larcom of March 16: "Credulity, thy name is woman! So thee believed that report, almost! Well, it may be true, but the first intimation of it came to me through the newspapers. *They* ought to know. I can't imagine how or where it started. It vexed me, but of course there was no help for it. It is the cruelest irony to congratulate a hopeless old bachelor, within one year of sixty, on such a prospect. I don't know about this 'freedom of the press.'"

TO APPHIA H. HOWARD.

5th 3d mo., 1867.

The idea of offering matrimonial congratulations to a hopeless old bachelor trying to thread a needle to sew on his buttons! As well talk of agility to a cripple, or of a rise in government stocks to a town pauper. Of course, thee did n't believe the silly story. I don't care much about it, but I should be sorry to have to read congratulations upon it by every mail. I wish the newspaper scamp who started it nothing worse than to be an old bachelor like myself, or to have a wife like Mrs. Caudle.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

18th 3d mo., 1867.

It was very kind in thee to write me a good long letter, knowing that I could never make a fair return, my letters being like the Irishman's blanket, "too short at both ends." When I read thy letter

I wanted to answer it right off, but I was not able to write then, and in fact am not now. I enjoyed thy little visit greatly, and sincerely hope thee will feel called upon to repeat it. On ——'s account I am glad she is in her old home once more, glad that she so kindly remembers me, and glad too for the little domestic intimation conveyed in thy floral symbols; for there are so few really fit to be mothers that it is matter of rejoicing when all the holy and beautiful conditions of maternity seem united in a pure and noble woman. God bless her, and make her highest hopes realities!

TO LUCY LARCOM.

4th mo., 16, 1867.

The spring delays — the time of mayflowers has nearly come, but they are not quite ready yet. I would like to have thee up here at the time of their blossoming. The snow still lies in the woods of Follymill. To-day winter has come back again, and a wind of despair blows out of the bitter east. I have read and done nothing for a long time. It seems a poor life of idleness, but I do not see how I can help it. I have had a great many strangers coming to look at me, and make speeches to me. It 's a sort of thing to make one feel sadly mean and ridiculous. I envy the stout, steel-muscled farmers. I would rather chop wood than talk poetry with strangers. And indeed I think the life of a hard-working farmer or mechanic altogether more enviable than that of a writer or politician. Not but that poetry has been a great solace and refreshing, at times, to me; and I am grateful for

the gift of verse which has been vouchsafed to me. But Plato and old Mr. Weller, I fear, are right in their discouragement of poets.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

6th mo., 1867.

I did not know of thy severe illness last fall, but that is no reason thee should be sick again next fall. Do not allow thyself to dwell upon such anticipations, my dear friend, but if tolerably comfortable to-day enjoy it to the extent of possibility and trust the good God for the future. At one time last winter it seemed hardly possible that I should live to see the orchards bloom again, but here I am still. God be praised therefor. Much of the time I can do little more than sit and think of old days and old friends, among whom thou art always numbered, very thankful to the kind Providence which has left me so many blessings of memory.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

8th mo., 8, 1867.

It is to sheer kindness of heart, my dear friend, that I owe thy pleasant letters so vividly representing life at the Shoals. They are wonderfully hospitable letters — they give me the freedom of the island. I sit by thy parlor fire in the stormy nights; I see the tossing boats in the little harbor; the islands ringed round with foam; I feel the spray as it tosses up through cleft and gorge; and I hear thee telling stories to the young folks, and half fancy myself a boy among them, nestling close to thee, with "not unpleasant horror" as the

tragedy deepens. It 's all very nice, but it puzzles me to know why I am favored in this way. There must be some mistake; I am getting what don't really belong to me. It was in no mock humility I wrote in "Andrew Rykman": —

> "I, who hear with secret shame
> Praise that paineth more than blame,
> Rich alone in favors lent,
> Virtuous by accident,
> Doubtful where I fain would rest,
> Frailest where I seem the best,
> Only strong for lack of test."

I am sure if I were younger, if I did not feel daily and hourly admonitions of a frail hold upon life, my good friends would go far to spoil me with flattery and kind offices. What right has one to be receiving all the time, and giving nothing in return? After two or three days of pain and lassitude, when the grasshopper becomes a burden, I feel so powerless and worthless, so lost in the absorbing egotism of mere physical sensation, that I should reckon myself a very dear bargain at that lowest of all conceivable prices, "a tinker's whistle." . . . That Sunday night when thee was up aloft in the cupola, I was sitting until late on the piazza of our shanty at Salisbury beach, watching the revolving light of White Island, and telling my nieces of my pleasant day there. All the afternoon we saw the dim outline of the Shoals. At sunset, the level sun flashed on the windows of Appledore, as if a sudden splendor had risen out of the ocean. I spent two days at the beach, and went home, leaving my nieces, and keeping bachelor's hall for some days. I had a lady visitor part

of the time and made her "work her passage." Between us we made a nice lot of currant jelly. I went over the river to Curson's Mills. Mary, Charlotte Forten, and myself went up the Artichoke, floating lazily along its dreamy shores, where the drooping ferns, azaleas, and witch-hazels mirror themselves in the still water, or as Marvell says: —

> "Where all things gaze themselves and doubt
> If they be in it or without."

An illustrated edition of Whittier's poems was in preparation in 1867, reference to which is had in the following note, which inclosed for the "Atlantic" the poem "George L. Stearns": "I meant to have brought the sheets of the 'Poems' with me to Boston, but as I have not been able, I now send them. Unless I make a complete remodeling of them, I must leave them much as they are. 'Mogg Megone' should be first in *place* as in *time*, and 'In War Time' should follow 'Home Ballads,' and close the book. Of course there will be a new arrangement as to the notes, which some of your folks must see to, as I cannot tell to what pages they will refer. . . . I have nothing I could venture to send you for the 'Atlantic,' unless the lines inclosed, on the death of Major Stearns, will serve your purpose. The poem is rather ragged and unkempt; but I think it would lose more than it would gain by any attempt to smooth it. The first line is all out of proportion as to length, but it says just what I wanted to say."

In a note to Mrs. Fields he gives the first hint

of his ballad "The Palatine," August 18, 1867: "I have written a little ballad which I am quite doubtful of, and wish I could consult thee and James T. about it. If my head will allow me to copy it and correct it, I shall send it to you, if you do not anticipate me by coming yourselves."

The legend on which this ballad is founded was told to Mr. Whittier by his friend, Joseph P. Hazard, of Newport, R. I., two years before the poem was written. About two years after it was published, he received a curious letter from Mr. Benjamin Corydon, of Napoli, N. Y., who wrote: —

"The 'Palatine' was a ship that was driven upon Block Island, in a storm, more than a hundred years ago. Her people had just got ashore, and were on their knees thanking God for saving them from drowning, when the islanders rushed upon them and murdered them all. That was a little more than the Almighty could stand, so He sent the Fire or Phantom Ship to let them know He had not forgotten their wickedness. She was seen once a year, on the same night of the year on which the murders occurred, as long as any of the wreckers were living; but never after all were dead. I must have seen her eight or ten times — perhaps more — in my early days. It is seventy years or more since she was last seen. My father lived right opposite Block Island, on the main land, so we had a fair view of her as she passed down by the island; then she would disappear. She resembled a full-rigged ship, with her sails all set and all ablaze. It was the grandest sight I ever saw in all my life. I know of only two living

who ever saw her, — Benjamin L. Knowles, of Rhode Island, now 94 years old, and myself, now in my 92d year."

Mr. Whittier's correspondence with Mr. Fields in regard to attending the readings given by Charles Dickens in Boston, in December, 1867, shows how real was his dread of finding himself surrounded by a large audience, unless he had the means of ready escape when the strain upon his nerves became too great for endurance. Fields had promised a good seat for him, but on the evening of the day of the reading, December 21, he sent this note: "Up to the last moment I have hoped to occupy the seat so kindly promised me for this evening. But I find I must give it up. Gladden with it the heart of some poor wretch who dangled and shivered all in vain in your long queue the other morning. I must read my 'Pickwick' alone, as the Marchioness played cribbage. I would so like nevertheless to see Dickens and shake that creating hand of his. It is as well, doubtless, so far as he is concerned, that I cannot do it. He will have enough and too much of that, I fear. I dreamed last night I saw him surrounded by a mob of ladies each with her scissors snipping at his hair, and he seemed in a fair way to be 'shaven and shorn' like the priest in the house that Jack built."

In the afternoon of the same day, he had arrived in Boston, and had taken a room at his usual inn, the Marlboro, whence he sent this note to Fields: "I came in from Lynn not expecting to hear the reading this evening, and not well enough really to go into a crowded hall for two hours. If

thee have any use for the ticket, or if anybody would be disappointed by not having it, I shall be quite as well satisfied to stay quietly where I am. I would like to see Dickens, but I have no head fit to hear him; and should prefer on the whole not to go this evening. Two mortal hours of listening is more than I can bear."

He did not attend the reading, but he had an opportunity of meeting the author whose writings he had so thoroughly enjoyed.

During the winter of 1867–68, Mr. Whittier was quite seriously ill with a fever. On the 18th of January, he was unable to write, but by the hand of an attendant he sent word to Mr. Fields that for four weeks he had been more seriously ill than he had ever been previously; the slow fever seemed at that time to be nearly ended, leaving him without appetite, and very weak. On the 28th, he wrote to Lucy Larcom: "At last I am allowed pen and ink (perhaps it would have been better if the prohibition had begun twenty years ago!) and can speak for myself. I have been very sick, but now am gaining every day. It will, however, be a good while before I shall get up even to my usual very moderate degree of health and strength. It is a marvel to me that I am as well as I am. I long for dry land, and the snow looks dreary! If I was well I should like it. I have done a great business in building castles in Spain. It is good and cheap amusement, and it is just about as well as if real timber and bricks were in use."

An illustrated edition of Whittier's poems was

published in 1868, and it was while this was in preparation that the following letter, dated April 2, was written to Mr. Fields. The proof-sheet it inclosed was of the poem "The Clear Vision," which was published in the May number of the "Atlantic": "I send back the proof with deference to thy suggestions. I think, as it now stands, the poem is good — considering who wrote it. I also send herewith a list of the ballads which I think best to print in the illustrated form. I have some question about including 'St. John.' I have taken 'The Wreck of Rivermouth,' only, from 'The Tent on the Beach.' The list will make quite too large a volume, as it is. What should be the title of the book? The old name 'Home Ballads' perhaps would do. I think the pieces will admit of some excellent illustrations — better, it seems to me, than 'Snow-Bound,' and indeed I regard the ballads as better than 'Snow-Bound,' — more variety and more picturesque. If thee think any other ballads would be better than these I have selected, let me know."

On the 12th of July he wrote: "In printing the ballads for your illustrated volume, I wish you to make the following correction in 'Mary Garvin.' The lines —

> 'And in the tales our fathers told, the songs our mothers sung,
> Tradition snowy-bearded leans on Romance ever young,'

should read thus: —

> 'And if, in tales our fathers told, the songs our mothers sung,
> Tradition wears a snowy beard, Romance is always young.'"

In June, 1868, Mr. Whittier said in a note to

Mr. Fields: "I have written a poem, 'The Two Rabbins,' a fantasy of mine, which I like better than most things I have written of late."

In September, Mrs. Fields urged him to read something from his writings before a Boston audience, in aid of a charity, and she received this reply, dated September 9: "Thee ask a miracle of me. Anything within the bounds of my possibilities I would do, as thee very well know, not only for the cause's sake, but for thine. Ask me to dance the polka, or walk a slack rope from the Park Street steeple to the State House dome — but don't ask me to stand up and read my rhymes to a Boston audience. I fancy I see myself doing it! And yet, how I wish I could! I am so sorry to have to say no, and disappoint thee. But it would be utterly impossible. I could not do it if I tried."

A pleasant incident in Whittier's life during the year 1868 was the finding again of his old Hartford friend, Frederick A. P. Barnard, who, soon after the days they spent together in Connecticut, went South and made a name for himself in science and in the cause of education. For thirty-five years the two friends never heard from each other except through their books, but when Barnard took the presidency of Columbia College, he wrote a long and affectionate letter to Whittier, which must have called out a reply equaling it in the warmth of its friendly interest. But the reply has not been found among the papers of President Barnard.

The following letter to Celia Thaxter shows

how he spent a part of the summer of 1868. It is dated 4th, 7th mo., 1868: "How long is it since I was complaining bitterly of cold weather, and setting my hearth aglow, in the leafy month of June? I am sitting linen-clad, and barefooted, by the open piazza door, trying to get a breath of the sweet air that just stirs the topmost spray of the lowest tree by the garden fence. On the opposite side of the road a boy is languidly discharging his patriotic duty to the Fourth by exploding a cracker at long intervals. A bumblebee, Emerson's 'animated torrid zone,' has found the sunshine a little too much even for him, and has left the roses to try the temperature of my room, and is buzzing and droning like a steam engine round my head as I write. The thermometer is at 100, with an upward tendency. I have been refrigerating myself with cool recollections of the mountains and the Shoals. . . . Since my return I have had company, and have been to the 'Laurel Party,' where I saw a great many people."

The laurel parties here alluded to, and which became one of the social institutions of Newburyport, are thus described by Mrs. A. B. Bassett, of Newton, Mass., the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Ashby: —

"My dear father and mother gave these parties annually for twenty-one years. They were very pleasant occasions, and became notable, as the years passed on, increasing in attendance, and including many distinguished visitors. The first was a small party of friends from out of town,

invited to visit the Laurel Grounds, in the perfection of the laurel bloom. This proved so enjoyable that it was repeated with additions, year after year. To many, old and young, it was a red-letter day in the year's calendar. Occurring the last of June, the weather, with but one exception, was perfect. The arrival and meeting of old friends, the repast at our house in Newburyport, the sail up the Merrimac to the grove on its banks, the redolent pines, the beauty of the laurels, the appetizing lunch at noon followed by speeches and songs, made the hours pass quickly, and the time for the good-bys came all too soon. Interesting and distinguished visitors were often with us. Whittier was always present, when his health and other circumstances permitted, and frequently wrote poems for the occasion. Four of these may be found in his collected works, entitled 'Our River,' 'The Laurels,' 'Revisited,' and 'June on the Merrimac.'"

At one of these charming gatherings the guests, who had so many times enjoyed the generous hospitalities of Mr. and Mrs. Ashby, presented them an album containing their photographs and many beautiful tokens of their grateful appreciation; upon the first page were these lines, by Whittier: —

"DEAR FRIENDS:

Accept this Book, whose pages hold
The sun-traced shadows manifold
Of friends, who 've known you long and well
At city hearth, in sylvan dell,
Enjoying under roof and tree
Your liberal hospitality;
Who, grateful, own that while you gave

Your life-long labor to the slave
(A labor crowned with more success
Than hope could dream, or wisdom guess),
You kept warm hearts, and opened wide
Your windows on life's sunny side.
Take, then, the Volume with our thanks;
And long upon your river banks,
When in azalea-gladdened woods
The June sun swells the laurel buds,
May we still meet, as we have met,
And larger make to you our debt."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

8th mo., 1868.

I am doing nothing at a great rate; come and help me. I, too, have dreamed of the Shoals and the hills — but they must come to me. They must return my visits now. Bring thy painting traps with thee; perhaps we may find a flower in despite of the drought. . . . Everything seems returning to its original dust. We are eating our bushel instead of our "peck of dirt." We can't lay the dust of the streets for fear the water will turn to steam, and blow up the cart.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

8th mo., 1, 1868.

By the way, thee ought to like that poem, for it would scarcely have been written but for thee. The thought of thee and thy sea stories and pictures prompted it, and when writing I was wondering whether thee would like it. As a Quaker, thee knows, I cannot have anything to do with the old heathen Nine, and so I have made thee serve my

[1] Mrs. Thaxter had written to Mr. Whittier to tell him of the interest taken in his ballad *The Wreck of Rivermouth*, which she had read to some of the guests at the Appledore.

purpose as a sort of tenth Muse. I could not have a better. . . . I send a bit of cardinal blossom from the foot of Po Hill. The river banks are scarlet with them. . . . We are drowned with rain; but to-day the air is crystal clear, and the green earth is beautiful. My pear-trees are breaking with heavy fruit, and the grapes are like those the Israelites found at Eschol.

TO MRS. APPHIA HOWARD.

8th mo., 1868.

I have had a constant dropping in of visitors this summer — mostly strangers — waifs from the seashore and mountains. The other day a plain-spoken neighbor of mine called on me for some matter of business, and when I told her there were two ladies in the parlor, waiting for me, she exclaimed, "What! more of them! Was ever man so beset? But it's good enough for you. You should have married a woman long ago, and she would have kept all the rest off." . . . I looked into the Suffrage Convention in Boston — a very dignified body. I see they put my name on the list of officers. But I am not willing now to connect myself with *any* organization. I am more than ready to welcome woman to the same rights which I enjoy. But with the abolition of slavery I felt myself released from *all* societies, save the one I was born in. When in Boston, I dined with Sumner, Emerson, and Whipple. Sumner seemed in good spirits, "jolly under creditable circumstances," like Mark Tapley. I hope Grant will have the grace and good sense to put him at the

head of the State Department. No man is so well fitted for it as he is.

The inspiration of Mr. Whittier's charming poem "Among the Hills" came to him in the summer of 1867. It is a tender and romantic love-story in verse, idealizing New England farm life; with a prelude which furnishes the darker shades needed to make the picture a faithful reproduction of rural scenes he undertook to portray. But this prelude did not appear in its present form when the ballad was originally published in the "Atlantic" for January, 1868, under the title of "The Wife: an Idyl of Bearcamp Water"; neither was the ballad proper quite half as long as is now "Among the Hills." It is an interesting study to note the changes through which this beautiful poem passed on its way to its present completeness. This blossoming out occurred in the summer of 1868. In its original form there were sixty-four lines in the Prelude, and it did not deal with the prosaic and disagreeable side of farm life, its shiftlessness and discomfort, as does the Prelude in its present form, which consists of one hundred and fifty-six lines. The passage which prophesies the gradual improvement in the conditions of farm life in New England, now being fulfilled, —

> "Even this simple lay of mine
> May seem the burden of a prophecy,
> Finding its late fulfillment in a change
> Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up
> Through broader culture, finer manners, love,
> And reverence, to the level of the hills," —

read as follows: —

> "Even this little lay of mine
> May lift some burden from a heavy heart,
> Or make a light one lighter for its sake."

The whole tenor of the Prelude is changed, so as to make it a new poem, with a burden of rebuke to those who are "blind to the beauty everywhere revealed" about them. The ballad proper enlarges upon the sweet story as originally told, making three hundred and forty-four lines instead of one hundred and sixty-eight, as at first. It is the landlady of the inn who tells the story in the latest version, and the landlord in the earliest. Mr. Whittier's first thought was to call this poem "A Summer Idyl," to offset his winter idyl, "Snow-Bound." But while he was reading the proofs of the book, he wrote to Fields: "It now occurs to me that it might be as well to omit the 'Summer Idyl' in the title, as I may sometime give something better entitled to the name." Its original sub-title, "An Idyl of Bearcamp Water," was also considered, but after the book was in press the name "Among the Hills" was decided upon. Comparatively few changes were made in the proof-sheets. In a letter to Fields, in October, Whittier refers to some suggestions for the improvement of the poem, and adds: "The reader will have to take something for granted. It is not to be expected that I should manage a scene of this kind like one who 'has been there and stayed all night.' I am not sure that I have bettered the verse beginning 'Her air, her smile, her head's fine poise.' Glance at the two and choose." It was decided to retain the form of the original magazine version: —

"Her air, her smile, her motions, told
Of womanly completeness."

The next stanza to this is a new one, not found in the magazine, and there is a story about the first line of it, connecting it with the name of James G. Blaine. In every edition for about a dozen years it read as it was originally written by Whittier: "Not beautiful in curve and line." But upon his first visit to Amesbury, Mr. Blaine took up "Among the Hills," and suggested an improvement upon this line, which was at once adopted by the poet. It now reads: "Not fair alone in curve and line."

There were ten new poems published with this ballad, including "The Meeting," "Hymn for the House of Worship at Georgetown," and "Lines on a Fly-Leaf." In returning the second proof of the work to Mr. Fields, November 1, 1868, Mr. Whittier wrote: "Thee will be sorry to see that I have made trouble for the printers by adding a few lines to the Prelude, which seem necessary to express my meaning clearly. I have done with it now, and give it over to its fate. In 'The Meeting' I have heeded thy hints, except as respects the first line.[1] I don't see as I can alter that. It might be

'The elder folks shook hands at last.'

Would that be better?"

The poem "On a Fly-Leaf," of which he said in

[1] The line as it was published in the magazine, February, 1868, was

"The elders shook their hands at last."

The change here suggested was made.

a note to Fields, "They are some verses I very much like myself," was suggested by a book then recently published from the pen of Gail Hamilton, entitled "A New Atmosphere." The felicitous portrait of this brilliant essayist was so true to the life that it was instantly recognized by the public, and called out from her a witty protest in verse.

The other friends to whom Whittier refers in the poem "On a Fly-Leaf" are Lydia Maria Child, Grace Greenwood, Anna E. Dickinson, and Mrs. Stowe.

The "Hymn for the House of Worship at Georgetown" was first published in the "Independent," January 16, 1868, and that paper made the following comment upon the fact that he who gave the money for its erection had imposed a condition upon his gift.

A Marred Memorial. — Mr. George Peabody, the banker, gave money for the erection of the Memorial Church in Georgetown, Mass., the town of his birth. The church was dedicated on the 8th of January, with interesting exercises, one of the striking features of which was the singing of the following hymn, written for the occasion by John G. Whittier. [Here follows the poem.] We venture to say that if the poet had known the conditions which the banker saw fit to impose on the Memorial Church, the poem would never have been written, and its author's name would never have been lent to the occasion. A correspondent of the "Independent" writes: "Mr. Peabody

says in his letter that the church shall never be used for any lectures, discussions of political subjects, or other matters inconsistent with the gospel. I do not give his precise words, but this is the substance. The church will be deeded to the society on the express condition that neither Liberty nor Temperance, nor any other subject of Reform, shall ever be introduced into the pulpit."

Mr. Whittier published a card in the Boston "Transcript" of January 30, as follows: —

"In writing the 'Hymn for the Memorial Church at Georgetown,' the author, as his verses indicate, has sole reference to the tribute of a brother and sister to the memory of a departed mother, — a tribute which seemed and still seems to him, in itself considered, very beautiful and appropriate; but he has since seen with surprise and sorrow a letter read at the dedication, imposing certain extraordinary restrictions upon the society which is to occupy the house. It is due to himself, as a simple act of justice, to say that had he known of the existence of that letter previously, the hymn would never have been written, nor his name in any way connected with the proceedings."

The following letters to Hon. J. J. Currier refer to the naming of a ship in honor of the poet: —

29th, 12th mo., 1868.

I shall be proud to have my name associated with a Merrimac-built vessel. I heartily thank the owners for this indication of their esteem, and hope they will have no occasion to regret their choice.

14th, 1st mo., 1869.

I am sorry that the state of my health will not permit me to avail myself of thy kind invitation to witness the launching this morning of the good ship in which I feel more than a nominal interest. I hope the Merrimac will give her a kindly welcome to her proper element. If my prayers were but those of a righteous man, that "avail much," she should have none but prosperous voyages. In the course of my life, I have done something in the seafaring line, as well as in Spanish castles, but unfortunately my ships rarely come to port. It is a satisfaction, therefore, to feel that I have now an interest in a stancher craft, substantial as oaken ribs and copper bolts can make her.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

5th mo., 6, 1869.

When I got thy kind letter inviting me to thy home, I had just read the preface to thy last volume, and was greatly saddened by the thought that I was never again to travel with thee. And I thought of my sister, how she and I had followed thee in all thy wanderings, so happy and so grateful for the privilege. There must come an end to all things — and I am not surprised at thy final decision, but I am none the less sorry for it. Thy invitation finds me too ill for visiting. I must remain quiet at home, avoiding exposure and excitement, as the sole condition of comparative freedom from suffering. And yet I long for the milder air of Chester County; but it costs too much now to get there. I saw thy description of Cedarcroft.

. . . The place must be very charming, and I am glad to see a poet with such fitting surroundings. Never fear that those who have followed thee thus far will not be with thee in other walks of literature.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

5th mo., 18, 1869.

I think I must be "growing in grace" to forgive thee, as I do, for letting thyself down to autograph-hunting. However, I don't know as I can claim much merit, for the pleasure of hearing from thee more than counterbalances the annoyance of being hunted. I am sorry dear Mrs. F. is overworking herself, even in *doing* good, when simply *being* good, as she is, is a joy and a benediction.

"Dear girl, for whom all sweet flowers bloom,
And happy birds their welcome bring,
What can my evening lend thy morn?
Or my late autumn give thy spring?

"I will not teach in mournful speech
That joys are brief, and hopes are lies;
To life well spent, its sun's descent
Is cloudless as its morning skies."

TO THE SAME.

8th mo., 12, 1869.

I am sorry my good cousins, the Cartlands, did not reach the island before we left. They are very dear to me. I wish thee could have known Moses A. Cartland; there are so few like him now left in the world! I am almost tempted to run the

[1] Mrs. Thaxter had called for an autograph for a young friend of hers, which was sent with the verses.

gauntlet of your great crowd on the island for the sake of seeing them, and bringing them so near to thee as to make thee know and love them as I do, for there are few better people in the world than Joseph and Gertrude Whittier Cartland.

An illustrated edition of "Ballads of New England" was published in 1869, and Rev. Dr. J. W. Hanson made inquiry of Mr. Whittier in regard to the localities represented in the engravings. This is Mr. Whittier's reply, which will interest those who possess this edition of his ballads: "In 'The Playmate' the first picture, Ramoth Hill, is about two miles from my residence. 'The lilies blossom in the pond' is a sketch from Lake Attitash, or Kimball's Pond, in Amesbury. The pictures of 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision' are from the banks of the Powow River in Amesbury. 'Amy Wentworth' is Portsmouth, and the harbor, and Kittery Point. 'The Countess,' Rocks Village, in Haverhill. 'Mary Garvin,' Saco River, near its mouth. 'The Rangers,' Casco Bay, near Portland. 'Wreck of Rivermouth,' Hampton river and the Isles of Shoals. 'The Changeling,' Hampton, Newbury, and Ipswich. I have thus briefly indicated the localities of the pictures, which I think are often better than the verses they illustrate."

While this work was in the hands of the printers, Mr. Whittier wrote to Fields: "The proofs arrived safely. Looking over them, the beauty of the engravings almost makes me ashamed of the verses they illustrate. In those of 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision,' 'Wreck of Rivermouth,' 'The Play-

mate,' and 'The Countess,' especially, I recognize the scenery familiar from boyhood, and which I have endeavored to associate in the mind of the reader of my ballads with the characters and incidents of local traditions."

In the "Atlantic" for December, 1869, W. D. Howells reviewed the illustrated edition of the "Ballads of New England," with the following complimentary reference to the illustrations designed by Harry Fenn: —

"Of course many things escape the formalities of praise; the light of the blooming apple-trees, the grace of the starry lilies that rock so light upon the ponds, the gloom and sorrow of the stormy seas, the wildness of the hemlock-bordered, rock-fretted forest streams, or their elm-bowered peace and solitude, the strength of the gnarled and twisted cedars, the brave cheerfulness of the lamps kindled in the lighthouse after the splendid sunset following the shipwrecking storm, the melancholy beauty of the harvest fields, — all these elusive charms are here, though they refuse to reappear in our phrase. Yet they are to be felt by all; not less by the untechnical many who can never understand the skill that made them perceptible, — but who can nevertheless meet both poet and artist in the common and finer air of sentiment and sympathy, — than by the critical few who without enjoying them more will do a stricter justice to the artistic power in them. . . . Some of Mr. Fenn's pictures are made on a hint of the poet, and some are the reflection, in a sister art, of the poet's descriptions; they are always faithful to his spirit,

and one believes that the author must have conceived just that lovely vision of the wayside orchard with its brier-grown wall, which the artist's pencil evokes from the lines in 'Skipper Ireson's Ride':

> 'Sweetly along the Salem road
> Bloom of lilac and orchard showed,'

and that in 'The Countess' he had in mind just that outlook from under the old bridge toward the hillside graveyard; for they seem as much the image of his thought as that grand stretch of glad New England landscape, — farm, village, city, and sea, — in 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision,' or that equally careful response to his words in 'Telling the Bees,' where, taking the poem and the picture together, it is hard to know who is most poet and who most painter."

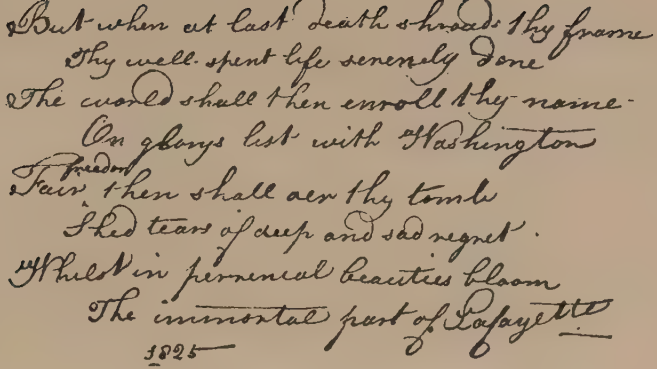
Among the poems written in 1869 and early in 1870, were "Howard at Atlanta," "In School-Days," "Marguerite," and "The Pageant." The origin of the first named poem was a letter from the headquarters of General O. O. Howard, at Atlanta, relating the incidents of the freedmen's school, as it is told in the poem.

Some pictures were sent to Mr. Whittier by the publishers of "Our Young Folks," in the hope that he might fit verses to them. To Lucy Larcom, then editing this juvenile magazine, he wrote, under date of November 13, inclosing the poem, "In School-Days," the following note: "I could not make verses for the pictures, but I send thee herewith a bit which I am sure is child*ish*, if not child*like*. Be honest with it, and if it seems too spooney for a grave Quaker like myself, don't

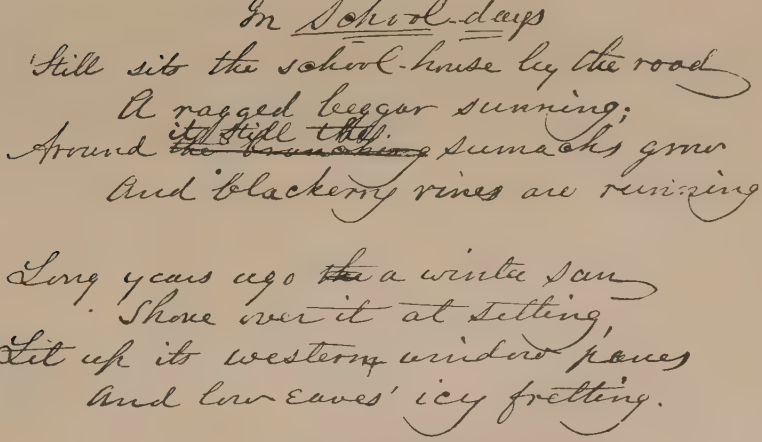
compromise me by printing it. When I get a proof I may see something to mend or mar." He *did* find something to mend when the proof came. The manuscript of the poem lacked the two stanzas now numbered as second and third. That which is now the fourth stanza was the second, and so on. No other change was made in that first proof, and none has since been made. Comparing the poem with the first draft found among Mr. Whittier's papers, we find that several verbal changes were made before it was sent for publication. The third line of the first stanza originally read: —

"Around the branching sumachs grew."

In what is now the fourth stanza it was "*the* winter sun" instead of "*a* winter sun." The "*tangled* golden curls" in the fifth stanza were "*drooping*." In the seventh stanza it was "shy, watching him," instead of "as restlessly." In the next stanza, it was "*small*" and not "*soft* hand's light caressing." In the last stanza "life's *hard* school" was "life's *grown* school." The first draft of the two stanzas added in the proof had the line "Its worn door sill betraying," instead of the present form, "Its door's worn sill betraying." All these changes will be recognized as decided improvements. The poem first appeared in "Our Young Folks," for January, 1870. Henry W. Longfellow, in a letter to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, makes this comment upon the poem: "There is something more in education than is set down in the school-books. Whittier has touched this point very poetically in that little lyric of his called 'In School-Days.'"


But when at last death shrouds thy frame
Thy well-spent life serenely done
The world shall then enroll thy name
On glory's list with Washington
Freedom's fair then shall o'er thy tomb
Shed tears of deep and sad regret.
Whilst in perennial beauties bloom
The immortal part of Lafayette
1825

From the original copy of his verses to Lafayette, 1825.


In School-days
Still sits the school-house by the road
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow
And blackberry vines are running

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting,
Lit up its western window-panes
And low eaves' icy fretting.

From the original draft of "In School Days," 1869.

FACSIMILE OF MR. WHITTIER'S HANDWRITING.

Many years ago, the little school-house commemorated in "School-Days" was sold, and it was to be removed by its purchaser. It had hardly started on its journey when one of the wheels on which it was placed broke down and the building was left in the middle of the road, where it was burned by the boys. The master's desk, "scarred by raps official," is preserved to this day, but it does not date back to the school-days of Whittier. In November, 1882, when the place was visited by Mr. Whittier for the last time, the foundation stones of the building, and the door-stone, were still in place. But after that date, in repairing the road, gravel was taken from the bank where the school-house stood, and the last vestige of it has disappeared. It is thought that the little girl Mr. Whittier had in mind when he wrote the poem was Lydia Ayer, daughter of his nearest neighbor, who died at the age of fourteen. But Mr. Whittier himself never indicated that the poem was other than imaginative except by including it in his collected works under the head of "subjective and reminiscent."

The sweet ballad "Marguerite" had the name of "The French Neutral" when it was written, which was nearly two years before it was published. The first draft did not quite satisfy the writer, and he laid it aside, after sending it to Mr. Fields, in November, 1869, with this comment: "What of this? Is it good or not? It seems to me to have real feeling in it. I hope I am not mistaken."

On the 30th of the same month, he wrote, in reply to some criticism by Fields: "I was by no means satisfied with the 'French Neutral,' when I

sent it, and had misgivings about it afterwards. I shall let it lie by awhile, and then see if it can be made anything of. In the mean time, I am glad to have it again in my possession. The subject is a good one if treated rightly."

In December, 1869, there was a statement published that Mr. Whittier had become so much dissatisfied with the new ways developing in the Society of Friends that he had given up attendance upon their meetings. To correct this misunderstanding he wrote the following letter, which was published in the "New Bedford Mercury": —

"I have found that the interest the best people of the different sects take in Quakerism is mainly confined to its realization of Practical Christianity, and I have noticed an ill-suppressed impatience and disgust when they find us [the Quakers] trying to win their favor by professing extreme Orthodoxy, and hunting heresy. . . . From my youth up, whenever my health permitted, I have been a constant attendant of our meetings for religious worship. *This* is true, however, that after our meeting-houses were denied by the Yearly Meeting for anti-slavery purposes,[1] I did not feel it in my way for several years to attend the annual meeting at Newport. From a feeling of duty I protested against that decision, but was given to understand pretty distinctly that there was no 'weight' in my words. It was a hard day for reformers: some stifled their convictions; others,

[1] In 1841, when Joseph Sturge was denied the use of the meeting-house at Newport, to deliver a lecture on emancipation in the West India Islands, a subject with which he was familiar from active participation in the work of securing the abolition of slavery in those islands.

not adding patience to their faith, allowed themselves to be worried out of the Society. Abolitionists holding office in the Society were very generally 'dropped out,' and the ark of the church staggered on with no profane anti-slavery hands upon it. I left the Society to its course, and took mine, feeling quite sure the work would go on whether Friends went with it or not. I never despaired of a great change in the views of the Society, but I knew I could do little to promote it. The pleas of youth and enthusiasm were not likely to be heeded by my elders, who, in common with the great majority of all sects, failed to comprehend the breadth and scope of a great Providential movement in God's controversy with oppression."

In November, 1870, he sent "Marguerite" to Celia Thaxter, asking her to criticise the ballad; "find all the faults in it and make a note of them." On the same day he sent the ballad to Mrs. Fields with the following note: "Some time ago I sent the first draft of this little ballad to J. T. F., and he, rightly considering its incompleteness, returned it. I have just been reconstructing it, and I send it, in the hope that it is better for my tinkering. You know that one thousand of the Acadians were distributed among the towns of Massachusetts, where they were mostly treated as paupers. I am not sure that I have succeeded in my attempt to recall the too probable scenes of a century ago. Read it, and let thee or J. T. F. tell me what it amounts to."

It was then accepted for the "Atlantic," and published in the number for March, 1871.

"The Pageant" was written for an illustrated

work that was projected for the holiday season of 1870. The plan was to collect winter pieces from Longfellow, Emerson, Bryant, Lowell, and Whittier, and bind them together in one volume, with suitable engravings. There was some misunderstanding about the time when the copy would be needed, and Fields wrote to hurry up Mr. Whittier's contribution. He replied, February 24, 1870, sending the MS. of "The Pageant," which was the only original poem in the collection, had the place of honor, and was beautifully illustrated by Harry Fenn: —

"I did not know that it was necessary to have the winter piece so soon, or I should have given the whole thing up at once, as I am in no condition of health to write at all. Since getting thy line I have been trying, however, to do my part of the book, and send to-day the result. I think it is too long, but could not help it. When in print I may be able to doctor it where it needs. It has cost me harder work than I would do again for any consideration, and has cost me a miserable headache and general out-of-sortness. Whether it is good or not, I am not able even to guess. It seems to me, however, a pretty accurate description of what I have seen. What will you call the book? How would 'Winter and its Poets' do? Or this? 'Winter: Ten Poems by H. W. Longfellow, R. W. Emerson, Wm. C. Bryant, James R. Lowell, and John G. Whittier. Illustrated.' Let me know what thee think of the verses when convenient. The poem will be difficult to illustrate. I know of no one who could do it, however, so well as Harry Fenn."

CHAPTER XII.

FRIENDS AND POEMS.

1868–1877.

THE wave of popularity which lifted Whittier into prosperity never subsided, and henceforth he was free from pecuniary anxiety. The great stress of public affairs also had been removed, and though he never relaxed his great interest and never was without a part in the movements, political, philanthropic, and religious, which stirred society during the remainder of his life, his sensitive health forbade ardent participation, and there was no one great and abiding concern like the anti-slavery struggle to force him into activity. The tranquillity of the last third of his life was in marked contrast externally with the tumultuous middle period, but it was, after all, the outward sign of his inward peace.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that gentleness was a necessity of his nature; it was in reality the result of resolute self-control, and the habitual government of a tempestuous spirit. He was quick and nervous in movement, but never otherwise than dignified and graceful. In conversation he spoke slowly and with precision, hesitating occasionally without the slightest nervousness for the word he wanted. This must have been the

result of his habit of self-restraint, which became his second nature. He religiously curbed his tongue, and said of himself that he was born without an atom of patience in his composition, but that he had tried to manufacture it as needed. To a dear friend of many years, with whom he had a misunderstanding that led to some sharp words, he wrote this characteristic explanation and apology: "Thee are right in thinking that I don't know much about what was said on the evening thee refer to. . . . If I remember rightly thee was unreasonably persistent in thy contention. When one is unreasonable himself, he is in no mood for tolerating the same thing in others. I dare say that I was a fool, but that is no reason thee should make thyself one, by dwelling on it. Lay it all to dyspepsia, Ben Butler, or anything else than intentional wrong on the part of thy old friend. We have known each other too long, and done each other too many kind offices, to let it disturb us."

The illness constantly wearing upon Mr. Whittier was believed by the physicians whom he consulted to be an affection of the heart, and he was warned to be exceedingly careful to avoid excitement.[1] The pain in the region of the heart was often severe. His headaches, more constant and nearly as painful, were more easily borne, as they did not seem dangerous. These attended him all his life, and accompanied every mental exertion. He could not write or read continuously for half

[1] During his residence in Philadelphia a noted physician examined him, and reported that there was no immediate cause for anxiety, — with care he might live to be fifty years of age.

an hour, in middle or later life, without severe pain in the head. This debarred him from lectures, receptions, and public dinners, unless an opportunity was given him to retire without notice, and without causing disturbance. A continuous mental strain of two hours was intolerable to him. This accounted for his frequent and adroitly managed disappearances during such festivities as those of his birthdays. This gave him a reputation for shyness that did not really belong to him. He was a man to enjoy society, and would have done his full part of the talking and listening in any company, but for the dread of the inevitable penalty. The more highly prized and interesting the guest he was entertaining, the greater the necessity of getting an occasional brief respite from his conversation. His intimate friends understood this, and would leave him to himself, at short intervals, and it was interesting to see the ingenuity with which he would escape from a bore, who did not appreciate or consider his infirmity. The trouble with his heart became less annoying in later years than in middle life. All his life he was seriously affected by his inability to secure sleep when it was most needed. When he met Charles Dickens, he told him that he read "Pickwick" to go to sleep by, and it was literally true. This kind of literature was improved by him as a soporific, because it was so thoroughly enjoyed that it banished the thoughts that kept him awake. The capacity for sleeping, he was wont to say, is the secret of the Englishman's power; as Emerson says, he puts a solid bar of sleep between two days.

He once said, "I inherited from my parents a nervous headache, and on account of it have never been able to do all I wished to do. [His interlocutor referred to the infirmities of St. Paul.] Paul's infirmities could not have been in his head, I think. He must have had a tough head; his writings do not indicate a weakness there. I have sometimes wondered, though it was not to be, of course, what the Christian Church would have become without Paul. It does not seem as if it would ever have gotten beyond the Jews."

Mr. Whittier had the misfortune to be color-blind, in respect to the shades of red and green. But he thought he had an unusual appreciation of the yellows, which fully compensated him for this defect. He saw no difference in color between a red apple and the leaves of the tree upon which it was growing. It was only the white or yellow rose that had for him any beauty except of form. He thought he enjoyed the splendors of an autumn landscape in a wooded country as much as the ordinary observer, especially if there was a fair admixture of yellow foliage. When he brought home bouquets of leaves, it was noticeable that the yellow greatly predominated. Perhaps his preference for the goldenrod as the national flower was partly due to its color. His mother discovered this optical defect when, a little boy, he was picking wild strawberries. He could see no difference between the color of the berry and the leaf. "I have always thought the rainbow *beautiful*," he once said with an amused smile, "but they tell me I have never seen it. Its only color to me is yel-

low." A reddish brown book was handed him, on the cover of which were lines of bright scarlet, and he was asked to tell the colors as he saw them. He thought the book was a dark yellow, and the scarlet lines stood out to him as bright yellow. Dr. Jeffries, an authority in color-blindness, says that Mr. Whittier was a typical specimen of the infirmity, and further, that the little woodcut portrait of him, published in Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s book catalogue, is the best picture he has ever seen of the characteristic look of the color-blind.

After he had passed middle life, his right ear lost its sensitiveness, and he became partially deaf. A severe cold would occasionally make it difficult for him to understand what was said by voices which were not familiar to him. But a familiar voice did not need to be much raised above its natural pitch in conversation. This dullness of hearing was not considered by him an unmixed evil, as in many ways it shielded him from annoyance. Sometimes his deafness afforded excuse for misunderstanding, or not replying to questions which he did not care to answer. Even when he had comparatively good hearing, he was not a good listener to a prolonged address. This antipathy to long readings is graphically set forth in his poem "The Demon of the Study." He once said that he did not care to listen to a discourse from any one but St. Paul; and after one hour of even his preaching he should want an opportunity to leave.

Mr. Whittier's laugh was peculiar. He uttered no sound, but his face and gestures showed his

amusement most expressively. If much moved, he bent forward, and smote his knee. Of his smile a writer says: "It is one of the sweetest smiles ever seen on the face of a man. It seems almost to be made of veritable lights and shadows. In repose his face is almost stern, but when anything amuses him you see a light dance for an instant in his eyes, and then seem slowly to expand over his face as a circling wave expands upon the surface of a placid pool. There is an appreciable time between the smile's appearance in his eyes and the slow parting of his lips, and there is something remarkably gentle in it all. He smiles frequently too, for he is always awake to the humorous side of things, and you cannot entertain him in any way more certainly than by telling him bright, witty stories. He catches the point instantly and eagerly. But the wit must be of a quiet order, — no roystering for him!"

A marked trait in the character of Mr. Whittier was the warmth and steadiness of his affection for his friends, and his tender solicitude for their health and comfort. His many years of anxious care for his invalid mother and sister had the effect to make him observant of symptoms of illness among his relatives and friends. The invalidism of people with whom he was unacquainted, when it came under his notice, touched his heart, and he was anxious to be helpful to them in word and deed. The appeals for aid which came to him in his letters from strangers were sure of response if illness was found in combination with poverty.

The following incident illustrates Mr. Whittier's kindness and consideration for those employed by him as servants. His washerwoman, Mrs. Choate, by industry and thrift had been enabled to build for her family a comfortable house. When it was ready for occupancy, there was a house-warming attended by all the neighbors, who brought substantial tokens of their good will, including all the furniture needed in her new parlor. Mr. Whittier's hand was to be seen in the whole movement; he was present at the festivity, and made a little speech congratulating Mrs. Choate upon her well-deserved success in life, and said he would read a piece of machine poetry which had been intrusted to him for the occasion. These are the lines, which were of course of his own composition: —

"Of rights and of wrongs
Let the feminine tongues
Talk on — none forbid it.
Our hostess best knew
What her hands found to do,
Asked no questions, but DID IT.

"Here the lesson of work,
Which so many folks shirk,
Is so plain all may learn it;
Each brick in this dwelling,
Each timber is telling,
If you want a home, EARN IT.

"The question of labor
Is solved by our neighbor,
The old riddle guessed out:
The wisdom sore needed,
The truth long unheeded,
Her flat-iron's pressed out!

"Thanks, then, to Kate Choate!
Let the idle take note
What their fingers were made for;
She, cheerful and jolly,
Worked on late and early,
And bought — what she paid for!

"Never vainly repining,
Nor begging, nor whining;
The morning-star twinkles
On no heart that 's lighter
As she makes the world whiter
And smooths out its wrinkles.

"So, long life to Kate!
May her heirs have to wait
Till they 're gray in attendance;
And her flat-iron press on,
Still teaching its lesson
Of brave independence!"

Whenever any neighbor died who had showed marked characteristics and singular individuality, no matter what his station in life, Mr. Whittier used to send his estimate of him to the village paper. Here is a small portion of his notice of a poor and aged Englishman, James Standring, who died in December, 1869: —

"He was a man not to be overlooked or ignored in any community. He was always comparatively a poor man, earning his daily bread by constant toil; he had little or no learning, and there was nothing conciliatory or prepossessing in his appearance or manners. Sturdily independent, he exercised the fullest freedom of speech; flattered nobody; and would have burned like a candle for opinion's sake had it been necessary. He had no disguise or reticence — his few faults

and his many virtues were open as the day. His distinguishing trait, that which made him a marked man in a community which has deservedly a reputation for liberality, was his abounding generosity. None who was poor, none who suffered whether providentially or from his own folly and crime, ever appealed to him in vain. After exhausting his own slender means, he had no hesitation in levying contributions upon his neighbors. He took the first man he met by the button, told the story of the want and suffering he had witnessed, and if he did not obtain assistance, he at least made refusal impossible without an uneasy conscience, and a sense of meanness on the part of the refuser."

There were several aged and indigent people in Amesbury over whom Mr. Whittier exercised a watchful care, helping with tender sympathy and judicious advice, and, when there was need, with money, tendered in a most delicate way. He called upon these friends more regularly than upon any others in the village, and even in his later years, when his infirmities were a sufficient excuse for not making his usual calls, he would not neglect these dependent neighbors. For one of them, who died a few years ago at the age of ninety-five, he planned a surprise party in 1870, and gave this account of it in a letter to his niece, who was then teaching a school for freedmen in Charleston, S. C. : —

"We had a grand surprise party at Uncle ——'s, — fifty present. H. C. and J. H. spoke, and J. W. C. presented in behalf of the company

a purse of $130. Several persons sent money, and messages, which I read on the occasion, and I took the liberty to put in some money and good wishes from thee, as I knew thee would like to do it. Don't let Uncle S—— know that thee did not know of it, as I should have written thee if there had been time. It was a very lively and merry occasion."

The village paper said of this occasion: "A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Whittier as the originator of the party, but that gentleman begged leave to disclaim all merit in the matter: — it was not his nor anybody's doing, — it grew out of its own fitness, — it made itself and came there of its own accord. 'Auld Lang Syne' was sung, and the party left at an early hour. The occasion will long be remembered as one of unusual social interest and enjoyment."

Among Mr. Whittier's neighbors was an aged pair, a brother and sister, whose simple, old-fashioned ways and quaint conversation he much enjoyed. He thought they worked harder than was necessary, as the infirmities of age fell upon them, for they had accumulated a competency, and on one occasion he suggested that they leave for younger hands some of the labor to which they had been accustomed. But the sister said, "We must lay by something for our last sickness, and have money enough left to bury us." Mr. Whittier replied, "Did thee ever know any one to stick by the way for want of funds?"

There were rumors in the village that an aged citizen was soon to be married, and that the matter

was to be kept secret until after the ceremony. Nobody could get at the truth of the rumor, however. One evening he called at Mr. Whittier's while a merry party in the "garden room" were discussing the affair. As Mr. Whittier started to meet his guest, he said to the party he was leaving, "I will find out about it." A committee was appointed to stand by the parlor door and ascertain how he would broach the subject. He began with the remark, "I hear thee are going to Boston," and followed it up with, "Washington would be a good place for a trip in the winter." This leading no whither, he finally ventured to remark, "I hear thee are going to do the best thing for thyself." This time he was successful, and his aged friend received his hearty congratulations.

Rev. S. H. Emery, of Quincy, Ill., a friend of Whittier's childhood, visited him in 1868, and together they recalled the scenes of their youth. Whittier was touched by the allusions of his friend to his Western home, where a wife, children, and a grandchild, Constance, awaited his return. Being asked for his autograph, he gave these lines: —

> "The years that since we met have flown
> Leave as they found me, still alone:
> No wife, nor child, nor grandchild dear,
> Are mine the heart of age to cheer.
> More favored thou, with hair less gray
> Than mine, canst let thy fancy stray
> To where thy little Constance sees
> The prairie ripple in the breeze;
> For one like her to lisp thy name
> Is better than the voice of fame."

For several years only short notes passed be-

tween Senator Sumner and the invalid poet. On the 6th of March, 1870, Mr. Sumner wrote from the Senate Chamber: —

My Dear Whittier, — The inclosed verses by you I find in a commonplace book of mine;[1] but not in any collection of your poems. As I wish to use them, will you kindly tell me where I shall find them? When were they written? Are they alone, or was there a context? Perhaps they were in an album. I hope you will let me know soon. Are they correct in form? I ask this, because the printers sometimes make a text unlike the original. I wish you could have seen Revels hold up his hand and enter upon his senatorship.

Whittier's reply was as follows: "It is good to see thy handwriting once more. The lines quoted are mine. I think they were originally written in an album or commonplace book. I think they are correct in form. That swearing-in of Revels must have been a sight compensating for much of the labor, trial, and obloquy which thee and other pioneers in the march of liberty have endured. I was with you in spirit. I read all thy words. I was especially delighted with thy remarks on the death of Lincoln and Fessenden. Viewed in connection with the circumstances,

[1] The lines inclosed were, —

"Believe me still, as I have ever been,
The steadfast lover of my fellow-men;
My weakness, love of holy liberty;
My crime, the wish that all mankind were free!
Free, not by blood; redeemed, but not by crime;
Each fetter broken, but in God's own time."

Whittier.

I know of nothing finer, truer, and more magnanimous. It is such things that bring thee near to the hearts of the people. . . . Senator Wilson is doing well with his papers in the 'Independent.' I think he will make a valuable and readable history of the great struggle in which he has borne so honorable a part. God bless thee always!"

TO LUCY LARCOM.

3d mo., 1870.

. . . . .

Pray give the "Atlantic"
A brief unpedantic
Review of Miss Phelps' book,
Which teaches and helps folk
To deal with the offenders
In love which surrenders
All pride unforgiving,
The lost one receiving
With truthful believing
That she like all others,
Our sisters and brothers,
Is only a sinner
Whom God's love within her
Can change to the whiteness
Of heaven's own brightness.
For who shall see tarnish
If He sweep and garnish?
When He is the cleanser
Shall *we* dare to censure?
Say to Fields, if he ask of it,
I can't take the task of it.

. . . . .

P. S. — For myself, if I 'm able,
And half comfortable,
I shall run for the seashore
To some place as before,
Where blunt we at least find
The teeth of the East wind,
And spring does not tarry
As it does at Amesbury;
But where it will be to
I cannot yet see to.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

3d mo., 5, 1870.

I am glad to learn that thee are making thyself happy in making others so. Probably there is no other way. My happiness has pretty much come in that manner, and my unhappiness from the selfish pursuit of enjoyment to the neglect of duty. . . . The other evening I went into a confectioner's shop in Amesbury, and the man and his wife immediately questioned me as to the author of the articles on the Shoals. They said they had lived down East among the islands on the Maine coast, and they had never seen the sky and sea and the seafaring people so well described. "Why," said the man, "they made me feel as if I was a boy again, rocking in my boat, or climbing the bluffs of Orr's Island and Matinicus." His wife said she had always felt there was poetry in that island life, but nobody before had written it out. So I told them something about thee, to their great delight. . . . How many good and nice people there are in the world! People too of whom we know nothing, and who know nothing of us.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

6th mo., 13, 1870.

I know thee must be greatly pained by the sad news of the death of Charles Dickens. Is it possible that that wonderful creative life is now but a memory? That that marvelous hand has forever lost its cunning? So they pass away — the great and good ones, who made themselves so dear and necessary to us! Where are they? What are they?

Shall we who are following them into the darkness and silence ever meet them again? Thee and thy husband, who have had the privilege of calling him friend, have at least the satisfaction of knowing that his earthly life was made happier by your kindness and love. What a brief and sad life this of ours would be, if it did not include the possibilities of a love which takes hold of eternity!

In the spring of 1870, Mr. Whittier spent some weeks in Brooklyn and New York, as the guest of his friend, Colonel Julian Allen, a brave Pole, who commanded a New York regiment in our civil war, and whose wife was a relative of Mr. Whittier's. Upon his return, on the 10th of June, he wrote to Mrs. Thaxter: —

"I ought to have told thee before how welcome were thy letters, but I have been in Babylon for some weeks, and have had to see and talk to so many people that I am very weary, and have not yet been able to attend to my letters. I must tell thee that many people speak of thy 'Shoals' paper in strong terms of admiration, poor Alice Cary — who is very ill[1] — and her sister, among others. One day when I sat by her bedside, Horace Greeley came in. He spoke of Boston writers and magazines, and then said in his slow Yankee drawl: 'Well, the best prose writing I have seen for a long time is Mrs. Thaxter's "Isles of Shoals" in the "Atlantic." Her pen-pictures

[1] She died February 12, 1871. This visit is referred to in the poem *The Singer*, in which Horace Greeley is called "our later Franklin."

are wonderfully well done.' Now that I call praise worth having."

TO CELIA THAXTER.

7th mo., 28, 1870.

Be thankful for sea-surrounded Appledore! We are literally baking alive here. . . . I spent the night like a wandering ghost, going from room to room, trying sofa and floors, and getting no sleep out of them. We have had a splendid day-break, but there is now a fierce menace of heat, and *not* "tenderly the haughty day fills its blue urn with fire." Over Po Hill the sky looks cool and hard, refreshing to eye and spirit, and the two great rustic baskets full of bloom and greenery, with their fresh luxuriance, make a pleasant contrast to the hot street and the dusty trees and shrubbery in the front yard. My little room is quiet enough. Lizzie is at Seabrook, and I am all alone. The sweet calm face of the pagan philosopher and emperor, Marcus Antoninus, looks down upon me on one hand, and on the other the bold, generous, and humane countenance of the Christian man of action, Henry Ward Beecher; and I sit between them as a sort of compromise. It is very still — the leaves move softly without sound; I can hear my own thoughts. . . . How I thank thee for thy letter just received, bringing me the sweet breath of wild rose and mignonette. It is as if the cool sea air of the islands blew over this feverish inland, and I bathe my hot, aching brow for a moment in the dream of a milder atmosphere. Pilgrims come and go, as usual, and now and then

old friends. Mrs. Pitman spent most of two days with me, and Lucy Larcom one. An old bachelor friend came to tell me of his newly resumed hopes of matrimony. It was very droll.

TO THE SAME.

AMESBURY, 8th mo., 1870.

I wish thee could see my pears and apples. The trees are bowed to earth with fruit. I wish I could send some of our wild flowers. The ground-nut vine especially, with its rare sweet fragrance; suggestive of, but more delicate than the heliotrope. It seems to me that as I grow older these beautiful works of God are more dear to me. Perhaps a sense of insecurity in their possession — the transitoriness of all that our senses take cognizance of — intensates the love I feel for them. Well, I hope the Hereafter will not lack something to remind us of the beautiful earth-life — beautiful despite its sin and sorrow.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

22d 9th mo., 1870.

I thank thee for thy offer of the Florida cottage, but I am quite unable to take advantage of it. I must live if I can, and die if I must, in Yankee land. . . . The foundations seem breaking up. I only hope that if the planks and stagings of human device give way, we shall find the Eternal Rock beneath. We can do without Bible or church; we cannot do without God; and of Him we are sure. All that science and criticism can urge cannot shake the self-evident truth that He

asks me to be true, just, merciful, and loving, and because He asks me to be so, I know that He is Himself what He requires of me.

We first hear of the poem "Miriam" in the summer of 1870, when Whittier sent the manuscript of it to Fields with this note: "I send thee a long poem, Oriental, and purely fiction, though consistent with the character of Akba and his Christian wife. I hope thee and dear Mrs. F. will like it. Pray let me hear from you about it." Fields recommended its publication with other poems, in a volume to be issued at once. Mr. Whittier made a list of the poems to accompany it, with a computation of the number of pages each would fill, and sent it with this note: "I think this is all (although I am not quite sure) and that I have computed the number of pages correctly. But until I see 'Miriam' again, amended and improved, I cannot decide about a new volume. What's the use of it, anyhow? 'Of the making of many books' there ought to be an end some time. Let me see 'Miriam' in type, and if she finds favor in my eyes, I will let thee know as soon as possible."

In October he wrote: "I send a dedication to my old friend, Fred Barnard, LL. D., President of Columbia College, New York, who used to rhyme with me during my sojourn at Hartford, nearly forty years ago. I think it will please him. . . . Is it necessary to have a full-page illustration for my little book? I rather shrink from seeing a pretty woman's face on my sober page, as thee suggested. It would be quite out of keeping."

Fields suggested a change in the second line of the dedication: "Under the Charter Oak, our horoscope," which grated on his ear, but Whittier replied to this: "I do not see how I can make a change in the second line. I can't destroy the Charter Oak before its time. It 's lucky that other folks' ears are not so sensitive as thine; and yet I feel the force of thy suggestion."

In several letters written about 1870, Mr. Whittier spoke of an intended volume with the title of "Indian Summer." At one time he was about ready to have it announced as forthcoming, but at the last moment wrote to his publishers to let the matter drop. It was probably to be a collection of poems, to be named for one he never completed, unless perhaps "St. Martin's Summer" was then in his mind.

In 1870, Lewis Tappan was engaged in preparing the memorial of his philanthropic brother, Arthur Tappan, and called upon Mr. Whittier for some word in regard to his old friend. He sent these lines (from his poem on Daniel Neall), which were printed on the title-page of the work: —

> "His daily life, far better understood
> In deeds than words, was simply doing good;
> So calm, so constant was his rectitude
> That by his loss alone we know his worth,
> And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth."

In a note which accompanied the lines, written in Brooklyn, May 2, 1870, he says: "It seems to me that this will well express the character of thy excellent brother. I shall be glad to have my name in this way associated with his and thy own. . . .

My pamphlet on 'Justice and Expediency' was published in the early summer of 1833. I printed only five hundred copies. I sent one to thy brother and soon received from him a very kind letter. He had five thousand copies printed at his expense. In the very early days of the anti-slavery cause thy brother's sympathy and liberality were the main dependence of the zealous but poor young men who engaged in it. We all remember him with gratitude. When Garrison was imprisoned, I appealed to Henry Clay to use his influence with his Baltimore friends in his behalf, and he wrote me that he intended to have assisted him through Niles of the 'Register,' but had been anticipated by Mr. Tappan. I shall look for the book with much interest."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

2d mo., 16, 1871.

Without the gift of clairvoyance how was I to know thy whereabouts? I trusted to my impressions, as a Quaker should, — or rather, as I wanted to see thee in Amesbury, "the wish was father to the thought," — that thee was at home. Had thee been, I dare say thee would n't have heeded my invitation, and so it is just as well thee are in Washington enjoying thyself.

> "If she be not here for me,
> What care I where she be?"

I am a little fearful that after all this intimacy with Excellencies and Honorables, and Mrs. Judge This or General That, thee will set thyself quite above thy plebeian friends at home.

I am not sure what effect it would have on me. But the last time I was in Boston, like Burns I "dinnered wi' a lord," and yet on leaving his lordship if I had met thee in the street I think I should have civilly nodded at least. I will lend thee all the aid I can in the matter of curtains and paint, but as I don't know red from green, I suspect my judgment in such nice matters. When thee returns, come up and see *my* improvements. I have finished off a sky-parlor in the attic very cosily, and I have a new carpet on the parlor, and divers other changes for worse or better; and I have lots of nice books and pictures — and my own hearty welcome for thee. My dear old friend of long time, Alice Cary, is dead — and I am sorry and glad — glad for her sake. Ah me! at the autumn time of threescore how the leaves of life fall around one!

I see in the "Independent" that a Western parsoness made an attempt to interview thee, in the cars. It seems that she had it all to herself, as she got never a word from thee, only "Say on, dear!" Thee should be thankful that she did n't put words in thy mouth as they often do in mine, and so make me responsible for their own platitudes. I am hoping against hope to hear of the "Tennessee." Dr. Howe and Fred Douglass are worth more to the United States than a dozen St. Domingoes. Tell Mr. Blaine I don't envy him his position as keeper of the great Washington menagerie — I take it the "specimen" we have sent him from our District[1] don't need "stirring up" to make him show himself!

[1] General Butler.

On the 21st of March, 1871, Whittier wrote to Sumner: "It really seems to me that Congress should not leave Washington without doing something to afford protection to the Union men of the South from Ku Klux outrages. I think, too, it would be best now to make amnesty complete, for the old officers, and thus take away a pretext for a disturbance, the sufferings of which fall upon the colored people. Having gone so far in our leniency, it seems to me useless to make any exceptions. Let us begin anew, and punish if need be all new offenses, but waive the past. Our real difficulty at the present time is that we have to deal with States. Had thy advice prevailed we should have been spared a vast amount of trouble."

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

4th mo., 19, 1871.

I am sorry to hear of your leaving Pennsylvania, but I am not sure but that it will be better. I feel myself the need of coming into nearer relations to the great life of our centres of civilization and thought, and if I were younger and stronger I should certainly spend my winters in Boston.

GAIL HAMILTON TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

June 1, 1871.

The Scripture teacheth us at all times to be willing to give up our own plans and adopt those of other people at a moment's notice. Now I don't quite dare go over to Amesbury Saturday, because I have so many artificers in carpets, curtains, paint-pots, white pines, dead hemlocks and other small

deer, that I am afraid to leave them; but what I do want — what I have set my heart on — what I will not be refused is to have you come over to Ashantee and spend Sunday with me. You have no excuse for not coming, because you show by asking me that you have no engagement, and if you will come, I will certainly go over in a week or two and make you a visit — if you want me to.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

7th 6th mo., 1871.

I was sorry not to see thee at Amesbury, and should have been only too glad to have spent First day with thee in the midst of thy palatial splendors, but the terrible heat of Seventh day was too much for me. I wonder what thee are doing in the way of building and gardening. I thought thy place all complete when I last saw it. I am afraid it will be so grand and pleasant that thee will have no disposition to visit my humble domicile. I want to go to Newport, to the Yearly Meeting, mainly on Lizzie's account, as she has never been there. If I am able, we shall go next Seventh day. I wonder whether thee really expected me or wished me to come last week. I was not sure whether it was earnest or play of words. But if I had been able, I think I should have taken thee at thy word. I have many things to talk about, many things to show thee, and I live in the hope of seeing thee under thy roof before long. I want to talk with thee on thy articles in the "Independent," and on the subject of woman's rights, labor, etc. I like thy views gener-

ally, but I fear we should quarrel a little on some points. I regard thee as about the wisest of women, but nevertheless venture to dissent now and then, perhaps rather to the manner of saying an unpalatable truth, than to the truth itself, which of course is right.

In 1871, Mr. Whittier edited "John Woolman's Journal," revealing to a new generation, and to people who had not before heard of this New Jersey saint and reformer, the beauties of his style, and the importance of his testimonies against the evils of his age. The delicacy and natural refinement of the unlettered Quaker made an impression upon the literature as well as the religion and philanthropy of his time, and Whittier did a good service in bringing his writings again before the public.

In the same year he edited a choice selection of juvenile poems by various authors, with the title of "Child-Life: A Collection of Poems," in which he had the assistance of Lucy Larcom. The purpose of the editors in this, as in the companion volume "Child-Life in Prose," issued two years later, was to make volumes which should not offend the cultivated tastes of parents, while amusing their children.

At the time this work was being compiled, some one sent Miss Larcom, in manuscript, a poem entitled "Jack in the Pulpit," but there was no indication as to its authorship. She sent it to Mr. Whittier, who was pleased with it, but thought he could improve it. He wrote to Miss Larcom,

April 20, 1871: "I send 'Jack' in a new dress. Whose is it?[1] The conception is so fine, some of its verses so good, that I have been tinkering on it, to get it into readable and printable shape."

In November, 1871, he wrote to Miss Larcom: "I 've got the sheets of our 'Child-Life,' and like the thing hugely. But I think now I shall take the credit of it all to myself. If it had not looked nice and good, I should have shirked it, and left all on thy shoulders. . . . I have been putting Yankee words to Christian Winter's ballad of 'Herr Volmer and Elsie.' A Danish friend has sent me what he calls a literal prose translation, and I have made a nice thing of it — omitting one or two things not in keeping."

After Sumner's speech of January 15, 1872, in favor of his civil rights bill, Mr. Whittier wrote: "Thank thee for thy noble speech! Some of our politicians are half afraid of it, but, depend upon it, the heart of Massachusetts is with thee. Amnesty for rebels and a guarantee of safety for freedmen should go together."

"The Pennsylvania Pilgrim, and Other Poems" was published in 1872. On the 24th of May, Mr. Whittier wrote to James R. Osgood: "I am half inclined to think it would be best to print my poem, a part of which I showed thee, in

[1] He did not find out in regard to the authorship before the volume was published, and the poem appeared anonymously. He afterward learned that Miss Carrie Smith, of West Medford, wrote the verses he had been "tinkering," and gave her credit for her work in subsequent editions, and also in letters to several newspapers. He followed the general plan of the original, but made many material changes.

a volume by itself. It contains about five hundred lines, divided into verses of three lines, and with the introduction and notes will make nearly fifty pages, or about the size of 'Snow-Bound.' I have added a good deal to it and, I think, made it a better poem. I think honestly it is as good as (if not better than) any long poem I have written. But if thee prefer to print a larger volume, including my shorter poems, I will not insist. I shall call it 'The Germantown Pilgrim.' It is now ready for the press save the addition of a few notes." The principal poem[1] in this collection tells the pleasant, quiet story of the learned and pious German, Pastorius, who in 1663, at the invitation of William Penn, brought a colony of his countrymen to Pennsylvania, and planted it near Philadelphia, his township including what is now the beautiful suburb of Germantown. He joined the Society of Friends soon after his arrival, and was the author of the first protest made by any religious body against slavery.

Among the dozen poems bound up with "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim," were "The Pageant," "Marguerite," "My Birthday," and "King Volmer and Elsie." W. S. Kennedy, in his "Life of Whittier," says the last-named poem is a paraphrase of the Howitts' translation of "Henrik and

[1] Sixteen stanzas of this poem, descriptive of the "Quaker Meeting," were published in the *Independent*, in June, 1872. In a note to Osgood, written in May, Whittier says: "Fields thinks it would be better to entitle it 'Pastorius of Pennsylvania.' I am not sure about it. He objects to the word 'Germantown.' We might call it 'The Pennsylvania Pilgrim,' a rather pleasant sounding alliteration."

Else"; but Mr. Whittier never saw the poetical translation by the Howitts.

Upon receipt of "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim," Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote to Mr. Whittier: "I have never thanked you for the kind welcome home you sent me under the best form of the book of poems, which we presently found time to read through, — my wife and daughters assisting. I confess to the frivolity of liking 'King Volmer and Elsie' the best, if only because the reader's voice broke suddenly at the summit of the story. But we will talk of this and much more, if you will in your lifetime come to Concord, as you once promised to do. My dame will not forget it, nor will let me if I could. Now, a week from to-morrow is the meeting of the Saturday Club, which you might honor oftener than you do. I pray you to come and spend Friday with us, and we will carry you down to the Club on Saturday."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

3d mo., 1st, 1872.

It was good in thee to send me thy new book. I had read most of it before in the "Independent." But a second perusal in fair type has been none the less satisfactory. It is one of thy very ablest books — shorn of some of the redundant wealth of diction which some reviewers complained of in thy first publications, but lacking none of their vigor and life and insight. I quarreled with thee often as I read, but, after all, laid the book down with a most profound respect for the wise little woman who wrote it. I shall not put my quarrels on

paper, but when a kind Providence gives me an opportunity I shall "withstand thee to thy face." I will simply say that my old bachelor reverence for woman has been somewhat disturbed by thy revelations. *I* am not going to condemn her because thee turn State's evidence against her. Voter, or non-voter, I have faith in her. Mrs. G. gave me the history of thy shawl hunt in Boston. I shall not waste my sage advice on thee any more. I don't see but thee are just as much given to worldly vanities as if thee had never had the benefit of a Quaker's counsels and example.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

5th mo., 1872.

To-morrow our Quarterly Meeting commences, and our house will be filled with "Friends." I have got two turkeys, and beef, and tongue, to *meat* the exigency; and Lizzie is making cake for lunch before meeting. . . . I see in Fields's "Yesterdays with Authors" that Dickens speaks highly of thy prose articles in the "Atlantic," but declares he don't believe it: "No, I don't. My conviction is that these Islanders must be dreadfully bored with their islands." I wish he could have seen them as we have. . . . I have a poem of length written last winter, "The Germantown Pilgrim," a Quaker story of the old times, which I like. It is as long as "Snow-Bound," and better, but nobody will find it out. . . . Is n't it droll that thy only vulnerable point, in the estimation of critics, is thy goodness! Too much piety! Solomon has a word of advice to such folks as are

"too good
For human nature's daily food."

"Be not righteous overmuch: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" But soberly, I think it is all nonsense — this objection to some of thy verses. Such nice folks as Joseph and Gertrude Cartland like them for the very thing complained of, and so do I, who am not nice.

Sumner became active in his opposition to some features of the policy of President Grant's administration. He made a speech in the Senate, May 31, 1872, severely denouncing the administration of President Grant, and opposing his reëlection. He felt sure this speech would give pain to his friend Whittier, and to him he wrote a letter of explanation. This is Whittier's reply, dated June 12: "I needed no assurance on thy part that thy speech was an honest one, and inspired by a sense of duty. And yet I am sorry for some parts of it, as I think its effect would have been better if it had been less severe. I inclose a note to the 'Transcript.' I think already a reaction has commenced, and many who denounced the speech strongly now feel that, after all, the charges it makes have not been disproved. Indeed, I have not much doubt that, if thy election as Senator were pending in Massachusetts at this very time, there would be a majority in thy favor; for I presume the great body of the Democrats would sustain thee, and the old Liberty party men are not all gone over by any means."

The letter of Whittier's to the "Transcript,"

referred to above, appeared in the issue of June 6, 1872: "As regards the senior Senator of Massachusetts I have no change of opinion to record. I have not forgotten his long and brilliant services in the cause of freedom and the best interests of his country and mankind. I know him well. I have stood side by side with him for thirty years, and it requires something more than a mistake on his part to make me desert an old friend. I confess that I have seen with some impatience men, whose Republicanism seems mainly to consist in their readiness to grasp the spoils of a victory won in a great measure by others, maligning, insulting, and displacing a man whose integrity, intellect, and acquirements are a standing reproach to themselves. I am no blind advocate of Senator Sumner, or any other man. I expect to see faults and frailties, and to grieve over the mistakes of those I love and respect. I regret the late speech, as it exposes the author to the charge of personal resentment, and because it seems to me unduly severe in its tone and temper. The Republicans of Massachusetts may, and probably will, dissent from its conclusions, through the press and at the ballot-box, but they have no occasion to question his sincerity or to charge him with abandoning any of the great principles which he has so nobly assisted, and for which he has suffered more than martyrdom."

TO A REUNION OF TEACHERS OF FREEDMEN.

1872.

I regret more than I can tell that I am not able to attend the reunion of the freedmen's friends and

teachers. My niece, who has spent three seasons in the service, is the bearer of this note. I honor the noble band of teachers who through obloquy and self-denial have done the pioneer work of the freedmen's education. The beneficial influence of their labor will be felt through all the future. It has been to me a great satisfaction to be connected in some degree, through sympathy and effort, with the good work.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

6th mo., 1872.

My Quaker poem ["The Pennsylvania Pilgrim"] is in type, and I have just looked over the proof. *I* like it, and if nobody else does, I shall not feel bad. I am glad thee are having a good time under the mountains. Is it David who says: "The weight of the hills is upon me?" . . . Don't make thy poem too long. Thee can cut it down, or *razee* it, after it is finished, I suppose, but it is hard to kill one's children, even if the family is too large. Thy strong points in the poem will be, or should be, characterization and description. The shades as well as the lights of that life in the mills should be given — the grotesque and the graceful.

On the 13th of August, 1872, Mr. Whittier's house in Amesbury was struck by lightning. When the shower came up, he was in the "garden room," while his nieces were in the little sewing-room on the opposite side of the house. He was on his way to suggest to them the propriety of leaving their work, and not sitting by the win-

dows, when the bolt descended. He fell to the floor and was for a short time insensible; both the ladies were also stunned. They all recovered their senses about the same time, but when they talked found themselves deaf. The deafness soon passed away, and the only lasting effect was a dread of thunder-showers from which Mr. Whittier never recovered. Up to this time the house had been "protected" by lightning-rods; Mr. Whittier had these at once removed, and would have no others in their place, although lightning-rod men were persistent in their attentions. One agent, provoked at his lack of success in getting an order from the poet, took revenge by causing a handbill to be printed on which appeared a picture of Mr. Whittier's house with a thunderbolt descending upon it, and a statement that this was what might be expected to happen to houses, the owners of which obstinately refuse to adopt the only sure method of protection! The damage to the house was slight; a beam was found split in the attic, a mirror was broken, and a window shade was burned in the sewing-room.

TO HARRIET McEWEN KIMBALL.

8th mo., 30, 1872.

I thank thee for thy kind note of the 20th. We had what ought to be regarded as a narrow escape. I was struck down by lightning, and my two nieces stunned. I suffered considerable pain in my head and along the spine, for a day or two, but am now much as before. Our house was not materially damaged.

Sumner's proposition, in 1872, that the colors of the national regiments should not bear the names of battles of the civil war in which they had been carried, was not at first well received at the North. The Massachusetts legislature, then in extra session, voted in the first heat of irritation to censure their Senator for this magnanimous concession to the feelings of a conquered section of the country that had returned to its allegiance. Whittier was greatly annoyed by this hasty action of the legislature, and set about creating a public sentiment that would force the next legislature to expunge the vote of censure. He wrote to Sumner: "I write just to tell thee not to believe for a moment that the *people* of Massachusetts have any sympathy with the 'resolution' adopted by a dead legislature galvanized into life by the governor's proclamation for a special purpose. Not a single respectable paper of any party has, to my knowledge, indorsed it. It is *deader* than the legislature itself. I have yet to see the first man or woman who speaks in its favor. Depend upon it, the heart of the old Commonwealth is sound and generous and turns towards thee with its old love and gratitude. She has learned to value pure-handed public servants. Dear friend of many years, be assured and hopeful. All is safe. God bless thee and have thee ever in his holy keeping."

A fortnight afterward he wrote on the same subject, after mentioning a report he had received of Sumner's failing health: "I hope thee will not make an effort to speak this term. The country is coming out all right as to thy 'flag'

resolution. The pitiful folly of our late legislature is already repented of. Believe me, thee never stood higher with the best people of all parties in the State. Amidst the miserable muddle of the Credit Mobilier it is something to be proud of that the smell of fire has not been upon thy garments."

A month later, Whittier reports a hearing before a committee at the State House, in the matter of the petitions he had been industriously circulating for signatures among the best men of all parties. He says: "I have just got back from the hearing of the petitioners for rescinding the vote of the extra session of the legislature. The great Green Room was packed full of the noblest men and women of Boston and the State. Governor Claflin opened the matter in a brief but admirable speech, and was followed by ex-Governor Washburn, in a long and eloquent argument and appeal. James Freeman Clarke followed, earnest and able, and John C. Park had the floor when I left, making one of his best speeches. The hall rang with applause of the various speakers. The whole thing was well done, and I hope for the best results. The reports of the speeches will reach thee as soon as this, but I could not refrain from dropping a line. Governor Claflin has worked most actively and efficiently in the matter."

In his effort to secure the rescinding of the resolution of censure of Charles Sumner, after writing to all his personal friends among the public men of the State, Mr. Whittier asked the help of statesmen, jurists, and editors in other States. To Hon.

William Claflin he wrote: "The great and general court have acted like fools, and worse, in denouncing Charles Sumner. I begin to hate parties and politics! I have sent to Hon. Willard P. Phillips, our representative, a draft of a petition for rescinding the odious resolution passed by the late extra session in censure of Charles Sumner. I make the movement not merely for Sumner's sake, but for the sake of the honor and goodness of our dear old Commonwealth. Sumner's fame is beyond its reach, but we cannot afford the disgrace on our records. I have not found one intelligent and respectable man who approved of that resolution."

Hon. Willard P. Phillips, of Salem, who was most active in promoting the expunging of the resolution, kept Mr. Whittier informed of the progress of the bill in the House. On the 14th of March, 1873, he wrote: "I have received several of your letters with inclosures, and thank you for them. The letters of Governor Noyes [of Ohio] and W. C. Bryant I have sent to the 'Advertiser' to print to-morrow, for which I trust I have your authority. Had I been compelled to speak to-day I would have read Judge Russell's letter, but now, as I shall not speak until Monday, I ask your authority to do so. . . . The committee have reported against us, on account of the miserable quibble as to the power of the legislature to rescind or amend a *resolution*, which in legislative technicality is simply an expression of opinion. This technicality will kill the rescinding in the House, and we shall go out before the people defeated in the legislature, but appealing to them,

and the appeal will not be in vain. The petitions and responses we have received are only a small specimen of what we shall have before we get through. The abuse of Sumner brings back to my mind the abuse of the Senator by the old Whig party, 'the lords of the loom and the last,' and the response of the people now begins to resemble the responses of the people in former times."

The effort was not successful in the legislature of 1873. Hon. Willard P. Phillips wrote to Mr. Whittier on the 20th of March: "The deed was done yesterday. It is as we feared, but the whole thing will help Mr. Sumner. What a triumph for him to be indorsed by such names as were on the petitions! Of what consequence now is the vote of the legislature?" But Mr. Whittier did not let the matter drop. He brought it before the next legislature, which by large majorities, in both houses, annulled the resolutions of censure. The last letter he wrote to Sumner was to announce the success of his persistent effort. It was received not long before Sumner's death, and gladdened the last days of the dying statesman. It was in these words: "The record of the Bay State is now clear. The folly of the extra session of 1872 is wiped out. I am especially pleased, as, like Senator Benton on a former occasion, 'solitary and alone I set the ball in motion.'"

While the question of rescinding the resolutions of censure was pending Mr. Whittier wrote an article which was published in the village paper of Amesbury, in which he said: "Should the mem-

bers of the present legislature fail to see in this movement that the people of Massachusetts are in earnest in the matter, and, in consequence, indorse the unjust action of the extra session, they will find that the question cannot be thus disposed of. It will press with tenfold force on the next legislature, and enter into every election until the obnoxious resolutions are rescinded and annulled. The people of Massachusetts, during the past session of Congress, have learned to value more highly than ever the clean hands and lofty antique virtue of their great Senator. His spotless character, his life of noble aims and glorious achievements, are brought into strong relief against the corruption and miserable dishonesty of too many of his colleagues. They forgive what they regard as his errors in judgment on some points, in grateful admiration of a man who might well be justified in using Milton's language of lofty confidence in his reply to Salmasius: — 'I am not one who has disgraced beauty of sentiment by deformity of conduct, or the maxims of a free man by the actions of a slave, but, by the grace of God, I have kept my life unsullied.' "

Mr. Whittier had not followed Sumner out of the Republican party in 1872, but their personal friendship was not broken by political estrangement. On several occasions he came loyally to the defense of his friend when unjustly assailed.

When the intelligence of the death of Sumner reached Mr. Whittier, he sent this note to Mrs. Claflin: "I have just received a telegram announcing the death of our dear and noble friend,

Charles Sumner. My heart is too full for words. In deepest sympathy of sorrow I reach out my hands to thee and Governor Claflin, who loved him so well. He has died as he wished, at his post of duty, and when the heart of his beloved Massachusetts was turning towards him with more than the old-time love and reverence. God's peace be with him!"

When Massachusetts would do honor to the memory of her great senator, Whittier was naturally called upon by the "old Commonwealth," as he was wont lovingly to entitle her, for an ode to grace the memorial service. No monument of brass or marble will outlive the noble tribute to his friend which he presented for this occasion. In these stately elegiac verses the character and career of Sumner are sketched with fidelity to truth as well as loyalty to friendship. In accepting the commission of the State he says: —

"I take with awe the task assigned;
It may be that my friend might miss,
In his new sphere of heart and mind,
Some token from my hand in this.

"By many a tender memory moved,
Along the past my thought I send;
The record of the cause he loved
Is the best record of its friend."

It is with pardonable pride he refers to the expunging of the vote of censure, which was due to his own efforts: —

"If for one moment turned thy face,
O Mother, from thy son, not long
He waited calmly in his place
The sure remorse which follows wrong.

"Forgiven be the State he loved
The one brief lapse, the single blot;
Forgotten be the stain removed,
Her righted record shows it not!"

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

1873.

It is such a voice as I have long wished to hear. It is the old Christian testimony which the Puritan and Quaker bore in their better days, and it never was more needed than now. The war has demoralized all — the contagion of its shoddy extravagance has reached everybody. The church and the world are alike infected. It has entered cradle and nursery, and turned the sweet simplicity and grace of childhood into a fashionable scarecrow. . . . Think of these grotesque caricatures of womanhood at the ballot-box! Of legislators in panniers and bustles, scant of clothing where it is most needed, and loaded down where it is not!

TO CELIA THAXTER.

2d mo., 1873.

Thy long poem "Lars" is intense in its half-subdued power; but the terror and cruelty of the sea was never described more strongly. It occurred to me that as it now stands, with the Norse name of Lars and Elsa, it would be understood as a fancy foreign sketch. I have tried to localize it by these two verses[2] by way of introduction: —

"'Tell us a story of these isles,' they said, —
The daughters of the West, whose eyes have seen

[1] On receipt of *What to Wear*.

[2] Mr. Whittier's suggestion was adopted by Mrs. Thaxter, and her strong poem stands with these two stanzas as a preface.

For the first time the circling sea, instead
Of the blown prairie's waves of grassy green;

"'Tell us of wreck and peril, storm and cold,
Wild as the wildest.' Under summer stars,
With the slow moonrise at our back, I told
The story of our young Norwegian, Lars."

TO RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

9th mo., 1873.

Thy kind note, and that of my friend John M. Forbes, are before me. I cannot tell thee how glad I should be to accept so kind an invitation. The season, the place, above all the company, attract me strongly; and it pains me to know that I must forego the pleasure. I have been suffering for ten days with a cold, with feverish habit, and should be in my present condition a guest to be tolerated, and not enjoyed. As soon as I am able to bear the fatigue I must go up among the New Hampshire hills, away from the sea. Ah, me! How sorry I am! How glad I should be, as our dear Holmes says, to see "the sun set over fair Naushon!" Thank my friend Forbes for me, and tell him that his threatened anathemas of the irrepressible Benjamin[1] would not in the least disturb me. I should not trouble myself if Dr. Slop's anathemas were poured out upon him. Who pities a rhinoceros peppered with small shot? I fear, however, that we shall have the man for governor. The influence of the administration is on his side, or he will claim it, and will not be contradicted. I feel in regard to present party politics an immeasurable disgust.

[1] General Butler, then talked of for governor by Republicans.

When Patrick S. Gilmore was making preparations for his great Peace Jubilee of 1873, he called upon Mr. Whittier for an ode appropriate to the occasion. But the poet could never make any engagement for his muse; he would make no promise, and advised the famous bandmaster to look elsewhere. Not getting any first-class writer to undertake it, Gilmore made a public call, offering a prize for an accepted ode from any source. There came to Whittier at about this time the inspiration of the verse, "Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace," and when the ode, now known as "A Christmas Carmen," was complete, it occurred to him to have it offered to Gilmore anonymously. The ode was sent, and coming from an unknown source received no attention from Gilmore. Those who now read the poem, knowing the occasion for which it was written, will wonder how Gilmore failed to recognize the exquisite fitness of the ode for his purpose.

"Sing the bridal of nations! with chorals of love
Sing out the war-vulture, and sing in the dove,
Till the hearts of the peoples keep time in accord,
And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!
Clasp hands of the nations
In strong gratulations:
The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

"Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace;
East, west, north, and south, let the long quarrel cease;
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God, and of good will to man!
Hark! joining in chorus,
The Heavens bend o'er us!

The dark night is ending, and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!"

TO MARGARET BURLEIGH.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 18, 1873.

I can fully understand and sympathize with thy New York friend in her graphic description of a Quaker protracted meeting. I hope and believe that some good will grow out of the "new departure." There are some people who from the very constitution of their minds seem incapable of receiving any benefit from the quiet self-communing of ancient Quakerism, and all such who are nominally in our Society will run naturally into these extremes of demonstration. I cannot; I am confused and bewildered by these noisy meetings, which seem so edifying to others.

In November, 1873, Miss Larcom being confined to her house by illness, Mr. Whittier, whom she was assisting in the compilation of "Child-Life in Prose," wrote: "It will be a good time while thee are shut in doors to turn to that dreadful book, which should have the benefit of thy reflection, whether sick or well, as the ancient Germans debated all matters twice, once drunk, and once sober."

In his preface to "Child-Life in Prose," published in 1873, Mr. Whittier makes some comments which have an autobiographic passage in them, referring to his own childhood: —

"It may be well to admit, in the outset, that the book is as much for child-lovers, who have not

outgrown their child-heartedness in becoming men and women, as for children themselves; that it is as much *about* childhood, as *for* it. If not the wisest, it appears to me that the happiest people in the world are those who still retain something of the child's creative faculty of imagination, which makes atmosphere and color, sun and shadow, and boundless horizons, out of what seems to prosaic wisdom most inadequate material, — a tuft of grass, a mossy rock, the rain-pools of a passing shower, a glimpse of sky and cloud, a waft of west wind, a bird's flutter and song. . . . It is possible that the language and thought of some portions of the book may be considered beyond the comprehension of the class for which it is intended. Admitting that there may be truth in the objection, I believe, with Coventry Patmore in his preface to a child's book, that the charm of such a volume is increased rather than lessened by the surmised existence of an unknown element of power, meaning, and beauty. I well remember how, at a very early age, the solemn organ-roll of Gray's 'Elegy' and the lyric sweep and pathos of Cowper's 'Lament for the Royal George' moved and fascinated me with a sense of mystery and power felt rather than understood. 'A spirit passed before my face, but the form thereof was not discerned.' Freighted with unguessed meanings, these poems spake to me, in an unknown tongue indeed, but like the wind in the pines or the waves on the beach, awakening faint echoes and responses, and vaguely prophesying of wonders yet to be revealed."

TO JOSEPH CARTLAND.

4th mo., 1874.

Have you read Augustine Jones's discourse? It seems to me he has done remarkably well. He has given in concise form the distinctive doctrines and testimonies of Friends. But those who wish to have it understood that Quakerism differs in no respect from Methodism and other so-called Evangelical sects are bitter against it. I have had, within the last month, visits from several Orthodox clergymen, two of whom I took with me to meeting. I found their ideal of Friends not quite satisfied. They want the old quiet and plainness. One of them said, "We need to come towards you, but you seem disposed to come to us." I was very sorry to miss seeing cousin Mary E. and her sister when they called at the hotel. "Rhoda"[1] is regarded justly as a very promising story, and is to be published in book form, and will be quite popular, I am sure.

TO W. D. HOWELLS.

1874.

The poem ["A Sea Dream"] which I had on hand for the January number, on a careful re-perusal strikes me as one that the world can do without. It is more faultless in rhythm and construction than my ordinary style of pieces, but it lacks "excuse for being." I therefore send thee a rhymed epistle ["The Golden Wedding of Longwood"] on the occasion of the golden wedding of some old friends of mine in Kennett, Pa., in

[1] *Rhoda Thornton* was a story then recently published, of which Whittier's cousin, Mary E. Pratt, was the author.

Bayard Taylor's neighborhood. It is n't learned, nor graceful, nor obscure with transcendentalisms, — but plain, homely verse as befitted the subjects and occasion, and I like it, and think some others will.

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

6th mo., 6, 1874.

Of course thee saw the great wedding at the White House. Sometime thee shall tell me all about it, especially about the ladies' dresses, in which thee knows I have a particular interest. Did thee meet Kingsley? I like him hugely; he is a manly man. I sat for my head and shoulders to Edgar Parker, the portrait painter, last winter, and Longfellow and others say it is a perfect picture. When can thee be spared from the seat of government? Thee might just as well be a Member of Congress under what King James calls "the monstrous reign of the women." I wish thee *was* "the Member from Essex," with all my heart![1]

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

7th mo., 14, 1874.

I love Beecher and believe in him. He has done good to thousands. If he has fallen into temptation I shall feel grieved, but would be ashamed of myself were I less his friend.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

1874.

I wonder what the Islands would be without thee — a mere pile of rocks, I imagine, dead as the

[1] Butler then represented the district.

moon's old volcanic mountains. Thee have given them an atmosphere. Does thee know that Parton in his lecture on "Fashion" introduces thee as the best-dressed lady he ever saw? Such is the penalty of writing and making books!

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

AMESBURY, 11th mo., 30, 1874.

Thy beautiful book of "Noonings" came to hand, and, as usual, I find it wise and witty, with just enough of unwisdom to make it spicy and enjoyable. Of course, I turned right to the 291st page,[1] and read my canonization! I wonder whether the old saints when invested with robes of sanctity found it so difficult as I do to walk in them. "Jordan is a hard road to travel." I am afraid I shall have to go back to the Quaker coat, after all. Only a day or two ago I lost my temper because somebody who was not a saint, but only an average church member, was perverse and ill-dispositioned; and I disputed the bill of an Irishman who thought it right to make spoil of a Protestant Egyptian, and I dare say he went away with no satisfactory evidence of my saintship. A French Jesuit missionary tells of a young lad who had been set apart from infancy as a Buddha, and was

[1] The passage referred to is in a talk with a young child who quotes something from Whittier, as from the Bible; whereupon the author says: "Blessed and beloved apostle! Sweetest saint in all the calendar! Worthy successor of that disciple whom Jesus loved; gentlest and tenderest of all the Sons of Thunder, *I* should not have dared to follow my heart's promptings and class you with those holy men of old; but when out of the mouth of babes and sucklings your praise is perfected, it is not for me to stand by and say them nay."

held in reverence by the Mongol shepherds. He told the Frenchman that he supposed he was a Buddha, and must sit still and cross-legged in his tent, and be worshiped, but if it was all the same, he would rather play with the boys. I think I can understand the young Tartar. If one must be a saint, he must, but if it is all the same, I prefer the rôle of an ordinary human creature. When does thee go southward? I don't quite like all the results of the late elections; but it is some comfort to feel that we shall now cease to be introduced to strangers as Mr. —— and Miss ——, from "Butler's District." I have been hoping to see thee again before it is too late for the season. Thy visit here was a most welcome one, but too short. I don't believe thee knows how glad I am to see thee. God bless thee always!

Pleasant Valley, in Amesbury, is an aptly-named neighborhood on the left bank of the Merrimac, which in this part of its course has its bed far below the level of the surrounding country. At some points there is scant room for the river road between the high bluff and the water; at others a wedge of fertile intervale pushes back the steep bank. The comfortable houses of an ancient Quaker settlement are perched and scattered along this road in picturesque fashion. At the lower end of this valley, near the mouth of the Powow, on the edge of a bluff overlooking the Merrimac, Goody Martin lived more than two hundred years ago, and the cellar of her house was still to be seen when, in 1866, Whittier first told the story

of "The Witch's Daughter," which had the leading place in "Home Ballads," with the "Proem" which then covered the whole collection of ballads in that edition. The other additions were made when "Mabel Martin" in nearly its present form was issued in a volume by itself, beautifully illustrated, in 1875. The only historical foundation for this charming ballad is the fact that Goody Martin, who lived at the place so graphically described by the poet, was hanged as a witch, during the prevalence of the dreadful delusion, being the only woman who suffered death on a charge of witchcraft on the north side of the Merrimac. The first three of the following letters to James R. Osgood were written while work was in progress upon the illustrated edition of "Mabel Martin." Some of the illustrations were from designs by Miss Hallock: —

11th mo., 11, 1874.

I have made up my mind. I will have "Mabel Martin" ready for thee as soon as thee wish it. I shall add to it some eighty lines, which will make it longer than Longfellow's. What I shall add will be full of pictures, and I think quite as good as any part of the original poem. I am very sure thee will like it, and that Miss H. will find it well suited to her work. It will be necessary to have the entire poem put in fair type, and I must have a proof, after it is revised. Miss H. must have a copy and I want another. After it is printed so as to be readable I want Mr. Anthony to see it.

11th mo., 1874.

I send back the proof with some changes I think for the better. I shall not meddle further with it except perhaps here and there a verbal substitution, before it is fixed irrevocably in book form. I am inclined to make the title read, "Mabel Martin, a Summer Idyl." I would like to see the revised proof before it goes to Miss Hallock. The poem is much longer than Longfellow's, and I should prefer not to have it so full of pictures, but more reading matter in their place. If illustrated as fully as Longfellow's it would make a book at least one third larger. As it now stands I regard it as the best poem of the kind I have ever written, and I am pretty sure I could not improve upon it in a new poem at this late day. I trust a good deal to Dr. John Brown's opinion of it.

22d, 11th mo., 1874.

I promised I would add nothing more to this poem, but I was tempted to do it in one instance. If it will be a serious inconvenience to make the change indicated on page 8, do as thee please with the added verses. At any rate don't send any more proofs to me, for I fear I shall go to disturbing what I think is very well as it is. I think Miss Hallock will find sufficient material in the poem as it now stands to answer her purpose of picture-making.

11th mo., 4, 1875.

Never was there a prettier book than "Mabel Martin!" If it does not sell well it surely cannot be the fault of the publishers and artists. The

poem [1] thee refer to is scarcely worthy to be called such — some twelve or fifteen lines, a part of which many years ago were printed anonymously in the "Transcript." I don't know why they were sent by me — except that I was told Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell had done likewise, or perhaps I was acting on the principle of the girl who married her importunate lover "to get rid of him." It is not worth troubling one's self about anyway.

12th mo., 25th, 1875.

I am greatly obliged, through thee, to receive from Mabel Martin her Christmas present of ($1000) one thousand dollars. I scarcely expected the young lady to "come down" so handsomely.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

3d mo., 1875.

I thought of thee at once when I heard of Bessie G——'s loss. How strange that we shall never see her more! That young, bright, beautiful life is gone out of the world! Ah me! by what a frail tenure do we hold all that we love! God help us to be true and generous and tender to each other while we may! . . . I remember Lindley Murray's Grammar defined a verb as "a word signifying to be, to do, or to suffer," which is just my predicament, leaving out the "to do." . . . Thy "Swallows" is in thy very best style. More and more I congratulate myself on my share in urging thee to "exercise thy gift," as we Friends say. I can sympathize with thee, or, what

[1] It is not certain to what poem reference is here made.

is better, laugh with thee, over the ludicrous blunders of the types. One gets hardened to these petty annoyances. The droll thing is that sensible people read these absurd perversions of another's meaning, praise the poem, and are innocent of the slightest suspicion that all is not right. They give an occult and transcendental meaning to "sawdust," or suppose that they are not practical enough to discern the beauty and significance of it. . . . And is it so strange to thee that the good people of Portsmouth should be glad and proud of one who has made her name a household word in the land, and made their river and harbor and outlying islands immortal in song? How glad I am that I can say to thee, "I told you so years ago!" Sir Walter Raleigh and other old prospectors sought in this New World the land of Eldorado. They went too far south. They sailed by Merrimac River, never suspecting that it plowed down through the valley of gold they longed for. The sober old town of Newburyport is transformed.[1] Its hotels are full of gold-seekers, sleeping three in a bed, and on the floor. A neighbor of ours, recently married, commenced last fall to dig a cellar for his house; he is now blasting silver out of his cellar, and the prospect is that we shall soon be as crazy as the folks down river.

TO MRS. GEORGE L. STEARNS.

4th, 3d mo., 1875.

I wish thee could have been with us. Thee

[1] Silver had been found in the rocky pastures of the neighborhood.

would have seen a sight which will not be likely to occur again — Garrison, Elizur Wright, Samuel E. Sewall, and myself together — four gray old abolitionists, dating back to 1832! It seemed strange as a dream to call back the scenes and emotions, the hopes and fears of forty years ago!

TO JAMES R. OSGOOD.

20th, 3d mo., 1875.

I have added two verses, mainly for the sake of bringing the British lion and Yankee eagle together. I do not like to add the note thee suggest. It will or *ought* to be understood, but I have changed the word. It is possible that I may send the poem to the "Atlantic Monthly," which will be published on the 20th of April, after your celebration. I prefer to have its title only "Lexington, 1775."

TO THE SAME.

1st, 5th mo., 1875.

I stretched my Quakerism to the full strength of its drab in writing about the Lexington folks who were shot and did not shoot back. I cannot say anything about those who *did* shoot to some purpose on Bunker Hill.[1] These occasional poems are fatal to any poet save Dr. Holmes. He always manages to come off safely. I am sorry I cannot oblige thee in this matter, but I don't think any verses of mine could add lustre to the memorial.

[1] He had been asked to contribute to the Bunker Hill centennial.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

7th mo., 1875.

How good Longfellow's poem [1] is! A little sad, but full of "sweetness and light." Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and myself, all are getting to be old fellows, and that swan-song might serve for us all — "we who are about to die." God help us all! I don't care for fame, and have no solicitude about the verdict of posterity.

> "When the grass is green above us,
> And they who know us now and love us
> Are sleeping at our side,
>
> "Will it avail us aught that men
> Tell the world with lip and pen
> That we have lived and died?"

What we *are* will then be more important than what we have done or said in prose or rhyme, or what folks that we never saw or heard of think of us.

TO LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

1875.

Thy confession as respects thy services in the cause of freedom and emancipation does not shock me at all. The emancipation that came by military necessity and enforced by bayonets was not the emancipation for which we worked and prayed. But, like the Apostle, I am glad the gospel of Freedom was preached, even if by strife and emulation. It cannot be said that we did it; we, indeed, had no triumph. But the work itself was a success. It made us stronger and better men and women. Some had little to sacrifice, but I always

[1] *Morituri Salutamus.*

felt, my dear friend, that thee had made the costliest offering to the cause. For thee alone, of all of us, had won a literary reputation which any one might have been proud of. I read all thy early work with enthusiastic interest, as I have all the later. Some time ago I searched Boston and New York for thy "Hobomok," and succeeded in finding a defaced copy. How few American books can compare with thy "Philothea"! Why, my friend, thy reputation, in spite of the anti-slavery surrender of it for so many years, is still a living and beautiful reality. And after all, good as thy books are, we know thee to be better than any book. I wish thee could know how proudly and tenderly thee is loved and honored by the best and wisest of the land.

TO GERTRUDE W. CARTLAND.

BEARCAMP, 8th mo., 1875.

We have been here for the last three weeks. It is a quiet, old-fashioned inn, beautifully located, neat as possible, large rooms, nice beds, and good, wholesome table. . . . I send you a photograph taken a few weeks ago. It looks, as I suppose it should, rather the worse for wear. Can you not come up here for a few days, and may I not expect you this week?

TO A MOTHER.[1]

I read thy letter with sincere sympathy. I can understand thy disappointment. But it may not prove to thee or thy child so sad a calamity as thee

[1] Whose infant was in some way malformed.

now regard it. It might have been idiocy, the saddest of all for a mother. It happens that two of my neighbors were born lacking right hands. But both have been exceptionally happy and prosperous. One is a skillful physician, and the other a successful teacher. The son of the latter is the finest landscape painter in the United States. Take courage, then; be thankful that the grief is no worse; trust thy dear child to the Lord. All will be well. If she is lovely in mind, or person, or life, she will be loved all the more for her deprivation.

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 1875.

I was greatly disappointed in not seeing thee when in New England. We visited the cars at each arrival [at West Ossipee] for two or three days, hoping to see thee step out. We had a pleasant company at the Bearcamp House — my nieces and half a dozen of their friends, and we should have made thee at home at once. I am far from well this autumn; yet the beautiful changes of the season have never seemed so sweet before, and life even with suffering seems desirable. When unable to leave home, I think of the friends I love, and the atmosphere warms and brightens around me, and my heart sings a hymn of thankfulness. What has thee read of late, and what written? I wonder thee does not write more, and how thee can keep so good a pen as thine still, I cannot conjecture.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

16th, 10th mo., 1875.

Lizzie and I went to Danvers a week ago to meet the Johnsons at their new place.[1] It is very nice, — twenty acres of lawn and all sorts of fine trees. But I fear they will find it lonesome. It is the old Nathaniel Putnam place, where Ann Putnam and her young circle of witch-friends used to hold their gatherings. She was Nathaniel Putnam's niece. I wonder if the place is n't haunted by her or her victims? The Johnsons are altering the house and will make it very pleasant.

TO GERTRUDE W. CARTLAND.

1875.

I have been negotiating about the "Old Whittier Homestead," and there is some prospect of getting it, but I feel less and less interest in it. Who will care for it after a few of us are gone? To us, who have reached threescore or thereaway, the mansions of the earth are of small importance, in comparison with those spoken of by our Lord, where only true rest can be found.

"The Vaudois Teacher," one of Whittier's earliest poems, was translated into French, and for many years was well known and popular among the Waldenses, who adopted it as a household poem. But it was not known by them to be of American origin until 1875, when Rev. J. C. Fletcher gave the information to the Moderator of the Waldensian Synod. Mr. Fletcher, while a

[1] Oak Knoll.

student under D'Aubigné, at Geneva, found this to be a favorite poem among his fellow-students, but did not then know it was by Whittier. He visited Whittier in 1857, and had by this time learned who was the author of the poem. What he told the poet of the influence of his verses moved Whittier deeply, and he was greatly pleased to know that he had composed lines that had cheered the Christians of the Cottian Alps. Upon Mr. Fletcher's return to Italy, in 1875, he wrote to Moderator Charbonnier, who communicated the information at a banquet which closed the meeting of the Synod. When the announcement was made, the whole assembly, composed of pastors, missionaries, and foreign delegates, rose and received with enthusiasm the name of "Jean Greenleefy Vittier," as they pronounced it. The Moderator was instructed to write a letter of thanks to Mr. Whittier in the name of the Synod. This is the letter he sent, bearing date, Torré Pellicé, Piémont, Italie, September 13, 1875: —

Dear and Honored Brother, — I have recently learned by a letter from my friend, J. C. Fletcher, now residing in Naples, that you are the author of the charming little poem, "The Vaudois Colporteur," which was translated several years ago in French by Professor de Felicé, of Montauban, and of which there is also an excellent Italian translation, made by M. Giovanni Nicolini, Professor of our College at Torré Pellicé. There is not a single Vaudois who has received any education who cannot repeat from memory "The Vau-

dois Colporteur" in French or in Italian. The members of the Synod of the Vaudois Church assembled to the number of about seventy at a pastoral banquet, on Thursday evening, the 9th inst., and unanimously voted the motion which I had the honor of proposing, viz.: That we should send a very warm Christian fraternal salutation to the author of "The Vaudois Colporteur." I was intrusted with the duty of conveying this salutation to you — a duty which I fulfill with joy, expressing at the same time our gratitude to you, and also our wish to receive, if possible, from yourself the original English, which is still unknown to us, of this piece of poetry, which we so justly prize. Accept, dear and honored brother, these lines of respect and Christian love, from your sincere friend in the Lord Jesus,

J. D. CHARBONNIER,
Moderator of the Vaudois Church.

Mr. Whittier's reply, dated Amesbury, 10th mo., 21st, 1875, is in these words: —

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I have received thy letter informing me of the generous appreciation of my little poem by the Synod of which thou art Moderator. Few events of my life have given me greater pleasure. I shall keep the letter amongst my most precious remembrances, and it will be a joy to me to know that in your distant country, and in those sanctuaries of the Alps, consecrated by such precious and holy memories, there are Christians, men and women, who think of me with

kindness, and give me a place in their prayers. May the dear Lord and Father of us all keep you always under His protection.

The letter of the Moderator was intrusted, for transmission to Mr. Whittier, to J. B. Braithwaite, a well-known English Friend, who chanced to be visiting Italy at that time, and who wrote to Mr. Whittier from La Tour sur Pignerol: "Being in these parts on a visit of Christian love to these dear and interesting people, I have been intrusted with the pleasing task of forwarding to thee the accompanying cordial salutation from the Vaudois Pasteurs, assembled at their Synod last week. Thy little poem, 'The Vaudois Colporteur,' has reached their hearts, and awakened a very warm feeling of Christian love. The Pasteur Charbonnier, the Moderator of the Synod, is a loving, warm-hearted Christian, and a man of considerable ability."

"The Vaudois Teacher" had currency in England as being written by Mrs. Hemans, until an English edition of Mr. Whittier's works was published in 1842.

In the winter of 1875, as Mr. and Mrs. Claflin, at whose house Whittier had been an honored guest, were about sailing for Europe, he handed them an envelope, saying, "I thought you might like my autograph." These lines were inclosed:

"What shall I say, dear friends, to whom I owe
The choicest blessings, dropping from the hands
Of trustful love and friendship, as you go
Forth on your journey to those older lands,
By saint and sage and bard and hero trod?
Scarcely the simple farewell of the Friends

Sufficeth; after you my full heart sends
Such benediction as the pilgrim hears
Where the Greek faith its golden dome uprears,
From Crimea's roses to Archangel snows,
The fittest prayer of parting: 'Go with God!'"

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 1875.

It was a very good thought of thine to send the handsome fireside implement [bellows], so useful as well as ornamental. In these times when the rascally railroads have cut off our dividends, after quarreling with each other until they are in the condition of the Kilkenny cats, with nothing but the tails of their prosperity left, an instrument for "raising the wind" is not undesirable. I had put my old asthmatic bellows in the care of a doctor skilled in lung diseases of that kind; as a cure is promised, I shall, agreeably to thy direction, make a wedding gift of thine. L—— is highly pleased, as she has an open fireplace in her new sitting-room, and bids me give thee my warm thanks, which she will, by the aid of the bellows, make still warmer if thee ever come to Portland.

The year 1875 is signalized in the Whittier bibliography by the publication of the collection of poems entitled "Hazel Blossoms," which has a reason for its name in the fact that the witch hazel throws out its bright yellow twists of spun gold in the late autumn; at sixty-eight the poet was already thinking of himself as in his "sere and yellow leaf," little dreaming that one fifth of his life, the best and most useful years, still re-

mained to him. The principal poem in the collection is the Charles Sumner ode, the strong, steady, dignified movement of which is in admirable keeping with its theme, and is unlike the usual work of Whittier, in its careful avoidance of impassioned utterance. There are probably few of his poems which cost him so much labor as was bestowed on this. Every stanza in it was recast many times.

In the same year appeared also "Songs of Three Centuries;" in compiling this, assisted by Miss Larcom, Whittier was quite rigid in his determination to exclude warlike poems. For this reason he did not at first intend to give Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn," but proposed to represent her by another selection. Afterward he wrote to Miss Larcom, "I got over my Quaker scruples, or rather stifled them, and put in the 'Battle Hymn.'" And he added: "It seems to me that we have scarcely done justice to Campbell — but we can't print his war pieces, and so we will let him slide."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

AMESBURY, 2d mo., 16, 1876.

Thy letter, bright and pleasant as the day on which it was written, has just reached me on one of the wildest and darkest days of sleet and wind-gusts, and very welcome it is. I have been at home most of the time this winter, but I spent three weeks of last month in Boston, at my old quarters in the Marlboro Hotel. I enjoyed being in the city, as I always do, though not able to go

about a great deal. I met Governor Claflin, who will return to Europe next month. I miss the family much when I am in Boston. My cousins Joseph and Gertrude Whittier Cartland are staying with me this winter, having sold their house in Providence, R. I. They are now prospecting for a new home in the country. My niece Lizzie is busy getting ready for flitting to Portland, where she is going to make a new home for herself and the junior editor of the "Transcript" of that city. So I shall be left alone, as I suppose an old bachelor should be, but I dare say I shall be provided for somehow, as I always have been.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

3d mo., 1876.

I have been about as usual this winter, and the company of cousins Joseph and Gertrude Cartland has been a great relief to the tediousness of the season. We have often spoken of thee and wished we could see thee. General Hawley and the chairman of the Centennial Committee came on to see me a while ago, wishing me to write the ode or poem for the grand occasion, Longfellow having given it up. I declined, not feeling able to go through the severe nervous strain of such an effort. They have since urged me to write the hymn to be sung at the opening, and I shall try to fix up something, I suppose. After Joseph and Gertrude leave I must make some arrangement for myself. Of course I must keep the old home, but I shall spend considerable time with my cousins at Danvers.

TO CELIA THAXTER.

Boston, 4th mo., 26, 1876.

I am here to-day in the worst east wind that ever blew in Boston (and that is saying much), attending the state convention for choice of delegates to Cincinnati. Lizzie was married a week ago to-day. Our small house had to be stretched on the occasion. The small rooms and cosy nooks answer a very good purpose for courting, but are not at all adapted to matrimonial celebrations. It 's rather lonely since Lizzie left us. But "such is life." . . . Thy poem ["A Faded Glove"] in "Harper's" is very sweet and tender in sentiment and feeling. It is in a rather new vein, but the vigor of the language betrays its authorship. Whether thee speak of the sea or not, the strength of the wind and waters is in thy verse.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

1876.

It was very kind in thee to think of me in the midst of emperors, and mandarins with their buttons, and pachas with many tails, and all that grand show and world display at Philadelphia. I sent my hymn [the "Centennial Hymn"] with many misgivings, and am glad it was so well received. I think I should have liked to have heard the music, but probably I should not have understood. "The gods have made me most unmusical." . . . I don't expect to visit Philadelphia. The very thought of that Ezekiel's vision of machinery and the nightmare confusion of the world's curiosity shop appalls me, and I shall not venture myself amidst it.

In 1876, the marriage of his niece, who had been at the head of his household since the death of his sister, led to Mr. Whittier's acceptance of the invitation of his three cousins, the Misses Johnson and Mrs. Woodman,[1] to make his home with them during part of the year. They had recently purchased the beautiful estate in Danvers, for which Mr. Whittier had suggested the name of "Oak Knoll." It was a farm of sixty acres, to which some acres have been added since the purchase in 1875. It is upon an old road between Boston and Newburyport, not the main line of travel. Upon this place lived the Rev. George Burroughs, who suffered death as a wizard two hundred years ago. The well of his homestead is still shown under the boughs of an immense elm by the roadside. The house now upon the estate stands on elevated ground at considerable distance from the road, and with its great Doric pillars has a somewhat stately effect, although constructed entirely of wood. In front of the house, and completely encircled by the curving approaches, is a picturesque knoll in the form of a dome, covered with a luxuriant carpet of grass, making one of the most charming lawns it is possible to imagine. This knoll, the summit of which is a little higher than the site occupied by the house, is crowned by two magnificent trees, an oak and a hickory. The estate might well have been named for either of these noble trees. The grounds slope towards the east,

[1] These three sisters are granddaughters of Mr. Whittier's uncle, Obadiah Whittier, an older brother of his father, John Whittier.

the south, and the west, with just enough of irregularity to heighten the beauty of the landscape in each direction. Trees, in clumps and singly, deciduous and evergreen, are placed with careful reference to artistic effect. The variety of trees is great, many of them being rarely seen in New England. There is a fine magnolia near the house, and farther off a tulip-tree. The rich dark hue of a purple beech calls attention to a fine grove in the western distance. There are English elms and English oaks, an immense Norway spruce,[1] also hemlocks, pines, chestnuts, and almost every other tree that can be made to grow in this climate. There are great orchards of apples and pears; a garden flanked with luxuriant grapevines, and yielding all the smaller fruits, as a matter of course, also roses in abundance. Near the eastern piazza of the house is a large circular flower garden surrounded by a neat hedge, with great green arches for gateways to it. In the centre of this garden is a fountain throwing a fine spray to a considerable height.

No shooting is allowed on the estate, and squirrels and birds sometimes come to the window to be fed.

Mr. Whittier in the summer time took much pleasure in these grounds, which gave him the seclusion he desired, and the opportunity for exercising some of the old skill that as a farmer he had acquired on his ancestral acres at Haverhill. The love of trees, plants, and flowers had ever been a passion of his life, and the ways of birds and

[1] Named by Dr. Holmes, "The Poet's Pagoda."

other wildlings interested him. The dogs upon the place became his pets. He enjoyed also the companionship of a young girl, an adopted daughter of Mrs. Woodman. For several years he spent a large part of the time at Oak Knoll, going to Amesbury to vote, to look after his little estate there, to mingle with his old friends and neighbors, to care for his dependents, to greet his Quaker friends at the Quarterly Meetings, and to have a hand in local politics. With advancing old age he turned oftener to his Amesbury home, and to his cousins, the Cartlands, at Newburyport, whom he accompanied year by year to his favorite summer resorts among the mountains and lakes of New Hampshire. Toward the last of his life he spent only a few weeks in the year at Danvers, manifesting more and more a desire to be at or near the home consecrated by memories of his mother and sister.

Early in 1876, Mr. Whittier was called upon to write the ode for the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia (not the hymn to be sung at the opening, which he afterward wrote, but the ode for the Fourth of July occasion). He declined to undertake this, as also did Bryant, Lowell, and Holmes, and Bayard Taylor was at length persuaded to write it. But Taylor had already written the hymn for the opening, and when he undertook the ode he withdrew this hymn. Whittier was then urged by Commissioners Hawley and Morrill to write the hymn, but was unwilling to promise to do it. Bayard Taylor added his entreaties, in the following letter, dated New York, March 21: —

My dear Friend, — Let me, at the risk of being a nuisance, add my voice to that of Hawley and Morrill, and beg that you will write the hymn for the opening of the Centennial Exhibition! I was chosen for the task, two months ago, and the hymn was complete, when the heavier duty of the ode devolved upon me, through the failure of so many better men to accept it. I know that this honor came to me chiefly through the kind suggestion of my name by you and Holmes. I feel it as a great responsibility, but I do not dare to decline, and shall both pray and labor to do the work worthily.

Of course the acceptance of the ode obliged me to withdraw the hymn. It would never answer for one author to do both. Moreover, I represent Pennsylvania, the cantata for the opening is furnished by Georgia, and the hymn must come from New England. Among American poets, you are by nature the high priest and thus fitted for this task. I wrote but five six-line stanzas, in the measure of Addison's "spacious firmament;" but five four-line stanzas — twenty lines in all — would really be sufficient. As it will be sung by a large chorus, and the personal presence of the author is not necessary, I cannot help but appeal to you as a dear old friend, as one who knows Pennsylvania, and as a true American, to help in this emergency. Knowing the state of your health, I was not surprised that you declined the ode, — but I am both surprised and mortified that Bryant, Lowell, and Holmes also declined. (Longfellow had a valid reason.) I anticipate being abused over

the shoulders of the commission, as well as upon my own; for the absence of our best names in song will not be generally understood. If you will only contribute the hymn it will cheer, strengthen, and dignify us all.

On the 22d of March, Mr. Whittier replied: "I have n't an idea in my head, and if I had, my head, possessed by the fiend Neuralgia, is in no condition to make it available. I am glad thee are to write the ode. It is right and fitting every way, and thee will do it grandly. As for the hymn, will thee do me the very great favor to send me a copy of *thy* draft of it? I want something suggestive to look at, before I decide to try to do anything; and I shall delay answering General Hawley's note until I hear from thee. Let me hear from thee by return mail."

This note came from Mr. Taylor by the next mail: "Your letter of yesterday just received, and I am delighted to find in it a *wish* to undertake the task. I most willingly send the hymn I had written, but have since withdrawn. Do not hesitate to make free use of any idea of mine which may seem appropriate. I shall be very glad indeed if I am able, in this way, to furnish kindling-wood for your fire. And that is all my hymn is worth now, since I shall suppress it wholly. April will surely be a balmier month than this March, and if you see but a single bud swelling, say 'Yes!' and it will surely open before May."

On the 25th, Whittier wrote: "Take my

thanks for thy prompt sending of thy hymn.[1] It is too good, and almost discourages me. I want to beg, borrow, or steal from thee two lines, slightly changed: —

> "'And unto common good ordain
> The rivalries of hand and brain.'

I covet more, but my conscience won't let me shoot any more in thy preserves. I am delighted with

[1] Mrs. Taylor has kindly permitted the publication in these pages of her late husband's *Centennial Hymn*, never before in print: —

> "O God of Peace! now o'er the world
> The armies rest, with banners furled:
> O God of Toil! beneath thy sight
> The toiling nations here unite;
> O God of Beauty, bend and see
> The Beautiful that shadows Thee!
>
> "Our land, young hostess of the West,
> Now first in festal raiment dressed,
> Invites from every realm and clime
> Her sisters of the elder time,
> And bare of shield, ungirt by sword,
> Bids welcome to her bounteous board.
>
> "Thy will, dear Father, gave to each
> The force of hand, the fire of speech;
> Thy guidance led from low to high,
> Made failure still in triumph die,
> And set for all, in fields apart,
> The oak of Toil, the rose of Art!
>
> "What though, within thy plan sublime,
> Our eras are the dust of time,
> Yet unto later good ordain
> This rivalry of hand and brain,
> And bless, through power and wisdom won,
> The peaceful cycle here begun!
>
> "Let each with each his bounty spend,
> New knowledge borrow, beauty lend!
> Let each in each more nobly see
> Thyself in him, his faith in Thee:
> All conquering power Thy gift divine,
> All glory but the seal of Thine!"

the idea of thy writing the ode. It needs thy combination of patriot and cosmopolitan to do it aright. I will indorse thee in advance, and so will Holmes, Longfellow, and Fields."

Bayard Taylor immediately replied: "Take all you want and welcome! There are some expressions which *any* hymn for the occasion must include; and such should be considered common property. I am only too glad to be of service in this way; my own hymn could in no case be published. . . . Thanks for your good wishes about the ode. It gives me the feeling of being about to storm an imminent deadly breach, — but if I fall, I am determined it shall be face forwards. The general acceptance of the appointment has been very kind."

On the 6th of July, 1876, Whittier wrote: "Let me heartily congratulate thee on thy noble and lofty-toned ode. It is in full accordance and keeping with the great occasion, and will link thy name honorably with it forever. I felt sure thee could do full justice to the theme, and I am sure all will agree with me that thee have done so. I wish I could have heard thy recitation of it."

Dom Pedro, emperor of Brazil, became acquainted with the writings of Mr. Whittier in 1855, and ever after that date welcomed each new volume of his, so long as he lived. When he visited the United States in 1876, the emperor was especially anxious to meet Longfellow and Whittier, and the Quaker poet was equally desirous of an interview with the Brazilian statesman and philanthropist, through whom there was then hope

of the abolition of the last vestige of slavery on the American continents. On the 8th of June, Mr. Whittier wrote to J. T. Fields: —

"Will the Atlantic Club have Dom Pedro as its guest? It has occurred to me that he would like it better than being toted about, looking at Boston public buildings. I would like very well to meet him, though I don't speak any language but my own, and that not very well. If he could only do as other folks do, I should like to have thee and Mrs. F. escort him here, where we could see him apart from the fuss and feathers of ceremony, for an hour or two. But owing to the 'divinity that doth hedge a king,' that can't be, of course. . . . I shall not try to reach him through the double wall of Boston and court etiquette. He is a splendid man, let alone his title and rank."

Mrs. Claflin gives this account of Whittier's first interview with the emperor: —

"Dom Pedro was invited one morning to a private parlor to meet some of the men who have made Boston famous in the world of letters. As one after another was presented to him, he received each graciously, but without enthusiasm. But when Mr. Whittier's name was announced his face suddenly lighted up, and grasping the poet's hand, he made a gesture as though he would embrace him, but seeing that to be contrary to the custom, he passed his arm through that of Mr. Whittier, and drew him gently to a corner, where he remained with him, absorbed in conversation, until the time came to leave. The emperor, taking the poet's hand in both his own again, bade him a reluctant

farewell, and turned to leave the room, but still unsatisfied, he was heard to say, 'Come with me,' and they passed slowly down the staircase, his arm around Mr. Whittier."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

Isles of Shoals, 7th mo., 1876.

The intense heat has driven me here for a few days, but the same cause has crowded these rocks, so that there is little more than standing room for us. I have to thank thee for two letters, the last inclosing the "Tribune's" report of the reception of Dom Pedro. It was kind in Bayard Taylor to quote my verses on the occasion. I heartily wish thee could be here this beautiful morning. I know by its heat-hazed outline that the coast is scorching, but a gentle southwest wind, cooled by blowing over twelve miles of sea, keeps us comfortable. The only trouble is there are rather too many of us, especially at the dinner tables. I believe there are about five hundred guests at the Appledore House. May I not hope to see thee this summer? My niece is keeping house very pleasantly in Portland, but I have two cousins at my house in Amesbury, and I should be glad to see thee there. I had a line from dear Mrs. Claflin, but have not yet seen her. I have not felt able to get to Newtonville these tropic days, most of which I have spent at my half-way house, at Oak Knoll, in Danvers, midway between Amesbury and Boston.

In a letter to Mrs. Child, written in 1876, Mr. Whittier says of Colonel Shaw: "I know of no-

thing nobler or grander than the heroic self-sacrifice of young Colonel Shaw. The only regiment I ever looked upon during the war was the 54th, colored, on its departure for the South. I shall never forget the scene. As he rode at the head of his troops, the very flower of grace and chivalry, he seemed to me beautiful and awful as an angel of God come down to lead the host of freedom to victory. I have longed to speak the emotions of that hour, but I dared not, lest I should indirectly give a new impulse to war. For his parents I feel that reverence which belongs to the highest manifestation of devotion to duty and forgetfulness of self, in view of the weighty interests of humanity. There must be a noble pride in their great sorrow. I am sure they would not exchange their dead son for any living one."

A favorite summer resort of Mr. Whittier, for many years previous to the burning of the hotel, was the Bearcamp House at West Ossipee, N. H. Several poems celebrate this region, including "Among the Hills," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," "Seeking the Waterfall," and the "Voyage of the Jettie." The inn was sometimes nearly filled with the relatives and friends of the poet, and these reunions were occasions of memorable enjoyment. Mr. Whittier could not accompany his friends in their mountain-climbing and drives to distant objects of interest, but he found enough to occupy his attention close at hand, and he especially enjoyed the reports of adventures that were brought to him by the younger members of his party. At this hotel, as at home, he took charge of the fires,

and of an evening would have his friends grouped around the ample hearth, joining with zest in all the sport in which they indulged. In the summer of 1876, when he and Lucy Larcom were engaged together in the compilation of the "Songs of Three Centuries," their work was brought to the Bearcamp House, but it was not allowed to interfere seriously with the main object of a summer outing, rest and recreation. Sometimes, a transient guest of the hotel would be invited to join the circle, but Mr. Whittier was usually under some constraint in the presence of a stranger, especially if there was any show of a reporting pencil.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

BEARCAMP RIVER HOUSE, 30th, 8th mo., 1876.

Thee must come up now; don't disappoint us all. Come and help eat our bear, which was killed two or three days ago on Chocorua. We have had nice tender and sweet steaks from him; and there is another old fellow on the highest peak of Ossipee mountain, who lately came down across the meadows here, to the cornfield. He has his den somewhere up there. Come and join us before our company is broken up.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

10th mo., 1876.

I have spent a large part of the summer at Danvers very quietly, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," unable to write or read much, spending the hot days under the pines, and fully realizing that the country can get on very well

without me. I only wished more of my friends of old days could be with me. For as the years pass and one slides so rapidly down the afternoon slope of life, until the dark and chill of the evening shadows rest upon him, he longs for the hands and voices of those who, in the morning, went up on the other side with him. The awful mysteries of life and nature sometimes almost overwhelm me. "What, Where, Whither?" These questions sometimes hold me breathless. How little after all do we know! And the soul's anchor of Faith can only grapple fast upon two or three things, and first and surest of all upon the Fatherhood of God.

Joseph and Gertrude Cartland have bought a pleasant place in Newburyport and like it very much. I am glad they are so near. I am reading Dr. Norman McLeod's Life — one of the most interesting of books — sweet, earnest, playful, full of love and good works, enlivened all along with poetry and Scotch humor.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 30, 1876.

No, I am not going to Newburyport. It is passing droll to see how the newspapers dispose of me this season. First, I am domiciled at Peabody; next, I was buying a residence in Portland; then I was dwelling in my cottage at the Shoals, secluded from everybody; then I am spending the summer at Martha's Vineyard as the guest of Dr. *Somebody* whom I never heard of; and now it seems I am in Newburyport! Was there ever such a Wandering Jew? A fellow in New York, the son

of a United States Senator, wrote me not long ago that as he understood I was well off and had a summer cottage on the Isles of Shoals, he wished me to let him have $200, as he was very hardly pressed for money! I wish I could go to sleep and wake up and find myself in the West Indies or Lower California. My cousins, the Cartlands, are located at Newburyport. They have bought and fitted up the house at the corner of High Street and Broad, where they will be glad to see thee.

TO MRS. CHARLES KINGSLEY.

1876.

In this country thy husband's memory is cherished by thousands, who, after long admiring the genius of the successful author, have learned, in his brief visit, to love him as a man. I shall never forget my first meeting with him in Boston. I began, naturally enough, to speak of his literary work, when he somewhat abruptly turned the conversation upon the great themes of life and duty. The solemn questions of a future life, and the final destiny of the race, seemed pressing upon him, not so much for an answer (for he had solved them all by simple faith in the divine goodness) as for the sympathetic response of one whose views he believed to be, in a great degree, coincident with his own. "I sometimes doubt and distrust myself," he said, "but I see some hope for everybody else. To me the gospel of Christ seems indeed good tidings of great joy to all people; and I think we may safely trust the mercy which endureth *forever*." It impressed me deeply to find

the world-renowned author ignoring his literary fame, unobservant of the strange city whose streets he was treading for the first time, and engaged only with "thoughts that wander through eternity." All I saw of him left upon me the feeling that I was in contact with a powerfully earnest and reverent spirit. His heart seemed overcharged with interest in the welfare, physical, moral, and spiritual, of his race. I was conscious in his presence of the bracing atmosphere of a noble nature. He seemed to me one of the manliest of men. I forbear to speak of the high estimate which, in common with all English-speaking people, I place upon his literary life-work. My copy of his "Hypatia" is worn by frequent perusal, and the echoes of his rare and beautiful lyrics never die out of my memory. But since I have seen *him*, the man seems greater than the author.

This is an extract from Mrs. Kingsley's reply: "He wrote to me (while in America) in such terms of love and appreciation of you, and twice repeated it was 'such a like-minded talk' he had with you. It did so refresh him. I shall always bless and thank you, and every one who gave him a moment's refreshing in the dusty road of life! And I do bless, and shall ever love, the dear American people who first appreciated his works and then welcomed their author so lovingly. . . . I thank you deeply once more, and hope in that other life I may know you and meet you, with my husband."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

11th mo., 4, 1876.

I feel anxious about the election. I think Hayes would be a safer man than Tilden, for the next four years. Tilden, however he might feel and wish, could not control his party. I hope I shall be able to vote, for I would n't like to lose my vote at this time. I have written a little poem which will appear in the February "Atlantic," which I hope thee will like. Did thee not say that thy ancestor was one of the suspected in the old witch times? My piece is entitled "The Witch of Wenham."

TO THE SAME.

2d mo., 22, 1877.

I have not read Joseph Cook's letters carefully, but a hasty perusal of two of them gave me the impression of a good deal of ability and smartness on the part of the author. After all, there is no great use in arguing the question of immortality. One must feel its truth. You cannot climb into heaven on a syllogism. Moody and Sankey are busy in Boston. The papers give the discourses of Mr. Moody, which seem rather commonplace and poor, but the man is in earnest, and believes in all the literalness of the Bible and of John Calvin. I hope he will do good, and believe that he will reach and move some who could not be touched by James Freeman Clarke or Phillips Brooks. I cannot accept his theology, or part of it at least, and his methods are not to my taste. But if he can make the drunkard, the gambler, and the debauchee into decent men, and make the lot of their

weariful wives and children less bitter, I bid him God-speed. Anything that lessens the sin of our poor humanity, any approximation to the life and spirit of the Divine Master, is to be rejoiced over. I feel more the need of a deeper consecration to truth and duty, on the part of all who profess to be Christians, than of putting any obstacles in the way of such a man. I like his aim better than his theology.

Whittier once said: "It is one thing to hold fast the faith of our fathers, the creed of the freedom-loving Puritan and Huguenot, and quite another to set up the five points of Calvinism, like so many thunder-rods, over a bad life, in the insane hope of avoiding the divine displeasure;" and again: "There is something in the doctrine of total depravity and regeneration. We are born selfish. The discipline of life develops the higher qualities of character, in a greater or less degree. It is the conquering of innate selfish propensities that makes the saint; and the giving up unduly to impulses that in their origin are necessary to the preservation of life that makes the sinner."

In 1877, Hon. Robert S. Rantoul, then residing at Stuttgart, was active in promoting an effort among the Americans and English to build a monument to Freiligrath, who died the year before. He called upon Mr. Whittier for a poem to be read at the dedication, and received this reply: "Thy letter has just reached me; too late, I fear, for the occasion to which it refers. I would gladly, were I able, send a word for the anniversary; as

it is, I beg the privilege of contributing my mite for the proposed monument to the memory of the poet-patriot, Freiligrath. I need scarcely say that I have been in hearty sympathy with him, as the foremost liberal poet of his time. In the dark days of our anti-slavery struggle, his brave words for universal freedom have cheered and strengthened me. . . . The bells are ringing in the new Republican President, Rutherford B. Hayes, in whose cabinet the German-born Carl Schurz has a place. His inaugural is a brief but noble document, and we hope excellent things from him."

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

7th mo., 15, 1877.

I do not know on what part of this planet thy blessed feet are resting at this moment, but I venture to send a line to Ashantee, just to tell thee that I have enjoyed thy mischievous political letters, though not always able to say "Amen" to them. Their art is "just splendid," as a schoolgirl would say. Stanley Matthews, who is really a fine fellow, and smart enough to appreciate a good thing even at his expense, must have tempered the vexation of thy epistle with a full sense of the capital fun and humor of it. The humbug of Reform is no better than other humbugs, but I am naturally inclined to think the best I can of all who claim to be trying to set the world aright.

And I have just conversed with thee in another shape — that of a theologian. I read thy little book[1] with deep interest and earnest sympathy.

[1] *What Think Ye of Christ?*

My own mind had, from the same evidence which thee adduce, become convinced of the *Divinity* of Christ; but I cannot look upon him as other than a man like ourselves, through whom the Divine was made miraculously manifest. Jesus of Nazareth was a man, the *Christ* was a God — a new revelation of the Eternal in Time. Thy book seems to me written with wonderful clearness and ability, and will command the respect and attention of the best thinkers.

And now Proteus takes a new form, and a very pleasant and fascinating one. I took up thy novel[1] last *night*, and, despite of aching head and eyes, read it straight through, and laid it down with regret that it was not longer. What a noble hero thee has made of the unsensational banker! The portrait of him is charming. His self-forgetting and self-restraining delicacy of feeling towards the bewildered and blinded young wife is a needed lesson to all who think the mere marriage ceremony gives them absolute right to the soul and body of another. I like the book entirely. I wish thee would sometimes look in upon me at Oak Knoll, where I shall be for the next six weeks. When thee are in Salem, the cars will take thee to within a short mile of us, and the coach is ready to take thee to our door. At any rate, here or there, staying or coming, politician, novelist, or theologian, — God bless thee!

Our dear Mrs. —— could not disguise herself as Mrs. Leveridge. I knew her, as Falstaff did Prince Hal, — by instinct!

[1] *First Love is Best.*

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

6th, 7th mo., 1877.

I am more and more astonished that such a man as Confucius could have made his appearance amidst the dull and dreary commonplaces of his people. No wiser soul ever spoke of right and duty, — but his maxims have no divine sanction, and his pictures of a perfect society have no perspectives opening to eternity. Our Dr. Franklin was quite of the Confucius order — though a very much smaller man.

Whittier once said: "I think every child should cling to the faith of its parents until it learns something better. The heathen, until they know something better, should cling to the faith of their parents. I can conceive of their being in such a state of mind that they would gladly receive the truth of Christ, if it came to them, and God will give them credit for that. In fact, I don't know but that the Hindus, swinging on their flesh-hooks, and others like them, are doing the best they know. They want to get rid of their sins in some way. But on the other hand, there are some who make faith everything. I have been in the habit of reading a paper published by Dr. Cullis, of Boston. But I don't place much credit in the answers to prayer there stated. He gets his contributions just as many other institutions do. Here is a man who has $100 to give to benevolence, and he gives it, giving the Doctor $25, the missionary society $25, etc. Dr. Cullis publishes that his

[1] About Samuel Johnson's *Oriental Religions.*

came in answer to prayer. So does the other just as much. . . . When men put faith on the material ground, who can wonder that Tyndall should propose a prayer test? I cannot help believing in prayer for spiritual things. Being fully possessed of Christ, then it is He that prays. The heartiest prayer is to pray, 'Thy will be done.' I have seen some who profess to have attained perfection according to their ideas, but I do not believe it possible to get it, to be sinless. None other than a perfect standard could be given toward which to aim. A woman came to me who said she came because she was sent. 'If thee are sent of God,' I said to her, 'then thee are welcome; I will welcome anything from God.' I asked her, 'Have thee no concern about thyself as compared with the infinite purity of God?' 'That is not the question that concerns me,' said she; 'I have shifted the whole responsibility on to Christ.' I answered that I thought that it would have been a singular event if, when Christ told the disciples to watch and pray, they had said, 'We have shifted that over to you, and it does not further concern us.' I asked the woman what her neighbors thought of her, but she did not answer this pertinent inquiry."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, AND LATER YEARS.

1877–1884.

Upon the approach of the seventieth anniversary of Whittier's birth, the "Literary World" published, in its issue of December 1, 1877, a remarkable array of tributes in verse and prose. Longfellow led off the singing choir with his charming sonnet, "The Three Silences;" Bayard Taylor sent "A Friend's Greeting," and E. C. Stedman, "Ad Vatem." Dr. Holmes, Paul H. Hayne, J. G. Holland, G. P. Lathrop, Hiram Rich, William Lloyd Garrison, Lydia Maria Child, James Freeman Clarke, W. S. Shurtleff, Celia Thaxter, Charlotte F. Bates, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Lucy Larcom, Israel Washburn, Jr., Henry Morford, C. P. Cranch, and Thomas S. Collier sent poems. Letters full of warm friendship and deep respect came from the venerable Richard H. Dana, W. C. Bryant, George Bancroft, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Francis Parkman, T. W. Higginson, Charles W. Eliot, Robert Collyer, George William Curtis, and Charles B. Rice. Such an array of great names in literature had not before been seen together in a single number of an American journal. Whittier was deeply touched by this outpouring of the hearts of his

literary friends, and uttered his characteristic "Response" in the sonnet beginning: "Beside that milestone where the level sun." This unique symposium was followed on the 17th of December by a dinner given at Hotel Brunswick, in Boston, by the publishers of the "Atlantic Monthly," to the contributors to that magazine, in honor of Whittier, who was with difficulty induced to attend the festival in person.[1] Mr. H. O. Houghton presided, with Whittier, Emerson, and Longfellow at his right, and Holmes, Howells, and Warner at his left. Among the guests were Higginson, Stoddard, Whipple, Weiss, J. T. Trowbridge, John Trowbridge, Underwood, Scudder, O'Reilly, Cranch, Clemens, and about fifty others. Mr. Houghton gave a brief history of the magazine, which was celebrating its twentieth anniversary. He introduced Whittier, and the entire company arose and cheered. When the cheering had subsided, Mr. Whittier said, slowly, and with some natural embarrassment in a situation so new to him: —

"You must know you are not to expect a speech from me to-night. I can only say that I am very glad to meet with my friends of the 'Atlantic,' a great many contributors to which I have only known through their writings, and that I thank them for the reception they have given me. When I supposed that I would not be able to

[1] When he got word about this proposed banquet, he wrote to his niece: "They are wanting to make a fuss over my birthday on the 17th. I think I have put a stop to it. It is bad enough to be old, without being twitted of it."

attend this ceremony, I placed in my friend Longfellow's hands a little bit of verse that I told him, if it were necessary, I wished he would read. My voice is of 'a timorous nature and rarely to be heard above the breath.' Mr. Longfellow will do me the favor to read the writing. I shall be very much obliged to him, and hope at his ninetieth anniversary some of the younger men will do as much for him."

Longfellow then read the "Response," Emerson read Whittier's "Ichabod," and speeches were made by Howells, Charles Eliot Norton, Warner, Higginson, W. W. Story, and others. Dr. Holmes read the poem in which he speaks of Whittier as "the wood-thrush of Essex." Richard Henry Stoddard read a sonnet to Whittier, which was notable as the cordial utterance of a political opponent.

The same anniversary was observed at Whittier's home in Amesbury, at Danvers, and in other places. The ladies of Amesbury sent him a portfolio of water-color sketches of places immortalized in his verse. The newspapers of every part of the country made the occasion the theme of extended comment, giving the record of his useful life, extolling his unselfish patriotism, his devotion to the cause of the oppressed, and the character and purity of his verse. The pulpit discoursed upon his songs of charity and piety. This chorus of praise, from every quarter, affected Mr. Whittier deeply. It gratified him to know that the love he had given out for his race was coming back to him in full measure. But he knew so thoroughly his own limitations and weaknesses that he

discounted the extravagances of adulation, and accepted only what he had reason to think belonged to him. It was in no insincere spirit he wrote or said his modest words of acknowledgment. To the citizens of Amesbury who had sent him a letter of high appreciation and warm affection he wrote: —

"Forty years ago I came to dwell among you, although the place of worship which I have always frequented, within the bounds of the village, had made me familiar with it from early childhood. I can testify to the uninterrupted kindly and friendly relations which have existed between us during that long period. You have known me thoroughly; my whole life, with its faults, follies, and better characteristics, has been before you in the daily intercourse of citizens and neighbors; and qualified as you are to judge of it, it is an unspeakable satisfaction to know that you can render so favorable a verdict. You will, I know, pardon me if I say that while the praise, which in the excess of your kindness you have bestowed upon me, has been very grateful to me, it has awakened a painful sense of my unworthiness to receive it without great qualification. I beg you, my old friends of Amesbury and Salisbury, to accept my warmest thanks for this testimonial, and for the delicate and considerate manner of its presentation. Circumstances may make our intercourse somewhat less constant and familiar than in former years, but your interests and welfare are mine; there is not a face among you that I shall not always be glad to see; not a rod of soil on the

Merrimac or the Powow that I shall not be happy to retread; and about my hearth-fire in the old house on Friend Street I shall still hope often to meet you, as long as Providence, which has spared me hitherto, shall prolong my days."

The birthday number of the "Literary World" contained this anecdote from a contributor, illustrating Whittier's hospitality: —

"When I was a young man, trying to get an education, I went about the country peddling sewing silk to help myself through college; and one Saturday night found me at Amesbury, a stranger and without a lodging-place. It happened that the first house at which I called was Whittier's, and he himself came to the door. On hearing my request he said he was very sorry that he could not keep me, but it was Quarterly Meeting, and his house was full. He, however, took the trouble to show me to a neighbor's, where he left me; but that did not seem to wholly suit his idea of hospitality, for in the course of the evening he made his appearance, saying that it had occurred to him that he could sleep on a lounge and give up his own bed to me — which, it is perhaps needless to say, was not allowed. But this was not all. The next morning he came again, with the suggestion that I might perhaps like to attend meeting, inviting me to go with him; and he gave me a seat next to himself. The meeting lasted an hour, during which there was not a word spoken by any one. We all sat in silence that length of time, then all arose, shook hands, and dispersed; and I remember it as one of the best meetings I ever attended."

After Mr. Whittier had passed the Scriptural limit of active life, each of his birthdays was more or less celebrated by his friends and admirers throughout the country. In churches, schools, and seminaries commemoratory exercises were held. Wherever he happened to be, whether at Amesbury, or Danvers, or Newburyport, the tributes of a grateful people reached him. Sometimes, when he felt that he was not strong enough to receive his friends so hospitably as he could wish, he would quietly slip from one of his homes to another, and thus secure the quiet his health demanded. But when he enjoyed sufficient health and strength, he did not object to giving his friends an opportunity to offer their congratulations in person. When a reception proved to be too fatiguing, he was skillful in devising excuses for short absences from the crowded rooms, and in the quiet of his chamber he would soon get rid of a threatened headache, or mitigate the intensity of his suffering, and appear again among his guests ready to enjoy and respond to their greetings.

Soon after the celebration of his seventieth birthday, Mr. Whittier wrote to his friend, Julia A. Hodgdon: "Of course, I prize highly the love and good will of others, but the thing was too pretentious, and had too much publicity to be altogether pleasant. Over-praise pains like blame. I know my own weakness and frailty, and I am humbled rather than exalted by homage which I do not deserve. As the swift years pass, the Eternal Realities seem taking the place of the shadows and illusions of time."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

4th mo., 7, 1878.

I agree with Canon Farrar that "life is worth living," even if one cannot sleep the biggest part of it away. Thee and I get more out of it, after all, than those "sleek-headed folks who sleep o' nights.". . . Against all my natural inclinations, I have been fighting for the "causes," half my life. "Woe is me, my mother," I can say with the old prophet, "who hast borne me a man of strife and contention." I have suffered dreadfully from coarseness, self-seeking vanity, and asinine stupidity among associates, as well as from the coldness or open hostility, and, worst, the ridicule of the outside world, but I now see that it was best, and that I needed it all.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Boston, June 19, 1878.

My dear Whittier, — 'T was very kind in you to tell me that my Andover poem pleased you. I wrote the poem rather as a duty than as a pleasure, and yet here and there I found myself taken off my feet by that sudden influx of a tide that comes from, we know not whence, but which makes being, and especially internal vision, so intense and real. You, as a poet, know so well what that means! But I will give a trivial illustration, which, to my mind, is much better than a grander one. In the intensified state of retrospection which came over me, a fact reproduced itself which I do not believe has come up before *for fifty years*. It was the "upward slanting floor" of the school-room at the

Academy. Not a poetical fact, and all the better for that, — not an important one, but still a fact which had its place in the old fresco that seemed to have utterly faded from the walls of memory. What an exalted state of vitality that is which thus reproduces obsolete trivialities as a part of its vivid picture-flashes, — just as in the experience, a hundred times recorded, of drowning persons who have been rescued! We may become intensely conscious of existence through pleasure or through pain, but we never know ourselves until we have tried both experiences, and I think that some of the most real moments of life are those in which we are seized upon by that higher power which takes the rudder out of the hands of *will* as the pilot takes the place of the captain, in entering some strange harbor, — and I am sure I never know where I am going to be landed, from the moment I find myself in the strange hands of the unknown power that has taken control of me. Not that there is much, if any, of what is called "inspiration" in the particular poem that pleases you; but there are passages, for all that, which I could not write, except in the clairvoyant condition. . . . To cover my egotisms, let me say to you unhesitatingly that *you* have written the most beautiful school-boy poem in the English language. I just this moment read it, because I was writing to you, and before I had got through "In School-Days," the tears were rolling out of my eyes. . . . Yes, I need not have said all this to you, as if you did not know it all, — perhaps I said it because you know it so well. . . . I am glad you are interested

in Dr. Clarke's book. I watched him during its preparation and discussed many points with him. To me the book is in every way full of interest, and it will always be memorable as having been written in the valley of the shadow of death. . . I have left no room for all the feelings I wish to express to you, — perhaps they are better imagined.

In June, 1878, Dr. William F. Channing wrote to Mr. Whittier a letter in which he made a spirited defense of his father, Dr. William Ellery Channing, who, in the Life of Harriet Martineau, edited by Mrs. Chapman, was accused of having prevented the Federal Street society from taking a stand against slavery, his action being imputed to moral cowardice. He also quoted a remark Mrs. Chapman made to him, to the effect that she considered Mr. Whittier, by his position in the Liberty party, to be in great moral danger. To this letter Mr. Whittier replied: —

"I have received thy letter, so permeated with pious regard for the memory of thy illustrious and sainted father. When I read Mrs. Chapman's remarks I felt indignant but not surprised. A moment's consideration, however, assured me that the incredible folly and falsehood could really do no harm to such a man as Dr. Channing. For he has left his own imperishable record — the undying proof of his love of freedom and abhorrence of slavery, and of his courage and self-sacrifice, in his writings. He is safe forever. Mrs. Chapman was an early and strenuous worker in the anti-

slavery cause, and I give her full credit for it. I understand well how she failed to comprehend and appreciate the labors of thy father, and of every man who, while periling all in the service of freedom, could bid God-speed to those outside of party who were yet doing something in their own way for the cause, and could make allowance for those who failed to see their duty clearly and who hesitated to pronounce our shibboleth. I am sorry, for her sake, that she has kept her old prejudices and misconceptions alive to this day.

"As to the matter of courage and self-sacrifice, very few of us have evinced so much of both as thy father. He threw upon the altar the proudest reputation, in letters and theology, of his day. With the single exception of Lydia Maria Child, I know of no one who made a greater sacrifice than thy father. I would gladly write an article on the subject if I could, but I am obliged to avoid any attempt at writing involving mental effort. But, as I said before, it does not seem necessary. With pleasant recollections of old anti-slavery days, I am truly and cordially thy friend."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

BOSTON, October 10, 1878.

MY DEAR WHITTIER, — I know how to thank you for the poems, but I do not know how to thank you for the more than kind words which make the little volume precious. I never was so busy, it seems to me, what with daily lectures and literary tasks on hand, and all the interruptions which you know about so well. But I would not

thank you for your sweet and most cheering remembrance before reading every poem over, whether I remembered it well or not. And this has been a great pleasure to me, for you write from your heart and reach all hearts. My wife wanted me to read one, — a special favorite of my own, "The Witch of Wenham," but I told her, "No," — I knew I should break down before I got through with it, for it made me tearful again, as it did the first time I read it.

I was going to say, I thank you, but I would say rather, I thank God that He has given you the thoughts and feelings which sing themselves as naturally as the wood-thrush rings his silver bell, — to steal your own exquisitely descriptive line. Who has preached the gospel of love to such a mighty congregation as you have preached it? Who has done so much to sweeten the soul of Calvinistic New England? You have your reward here in the affection with which all our people, who are capable of loving anybody, regard you. I trust you will find a still higher, in that world, the harmonies of which find an echo in so many of your songs.

Whittier used whatever influence he possessed in securing for Bayard Taylor the nomination to be ambassador of the United States at Berlin, which was tendered him by President Hayes, early in 1878. Taylor died at his post in Berlin, in December of the same year. The last letter from him found among the papers of Mr. Whittier is one from which the following extract is made, dated

New York, February 20, 1878: "I return heartfelt thanks for the greeting and blessing. The nomination comes just when I can turn it to the service of my most important literary work, — and I gladly accept it for that reason alone. But the response to it, not only by our true friends, but really by the whole country, is the best honor it gives. I am very grateful for this."

We come now to the last letter sent by Whittier to the friend he loved so dearly, and it cheered the last hours of the dying man.[1] It was dated November 27, 1878: —

"I have just got 'Prince Deukalion.' It is a great poem — how great I hardly dare venture to say. To me it recalls the great dramas of the immortal Greeks — not so much in resemblance, as in its solemnity and power. I rejoice that such a poem is thine. I was glad to hear from Osgood, a few days ago, that thy health was rapidly improving. We all feel an interest in the good news. Do not trouble thyself to answer this note. I know how thy time must be occupied. I only wanted to say how I am impressed by thy new poem, and to utter the old prayer, never out of place: 'God bless thee!'"

TO GAIL HAMILTON.

I hear nothing from thee directly. I read thy political papers with a rather confusing sense of admiration and regret, wonder and pride in the

[1] "This letter, received shortly before the end came, gave my husband unspeakable pleasure. It was the only praise of his drama which reached him after publication of it.

"MARIE TAYLOR."

power exhibited, but with frequent misgivings as to the justice of some of thy strictures. For myself, I do not feel called upon to enter into these present contests. The game seems to me hardly worth the candle. The issues seem small and poor. I suppose I am growing old, and am disposed to ask for peace in my day. I have had enough of fighting in the old days.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

12th mo., 16, 1878.

I am glad you have had Edwin Arnold's poem, "He who died at Azan," to offset "Omar Khayyám." The latter is a fierce revolt against the fatalism of Calvinism of the Moslem creed, by one who had been taught that there was no other and better revelation of God than the letter of the Koran. "The One who died at Azan" looked from that letter to the spiritual intimations of immortality. I know of nothing ancient or modern which is so filled with a robust and satisfying faith as this little poem.

TO HARRIET P. FOWLER.

Oak Knoll, 1878.

I was very happy to get thy beautiful flowers, in perfect order, last night — the Dutchman's nether integuments included! My little study is made gorgeous with them. I am glad thee are able to enjoy this charming weather — this wonderful spring — after thy long illness. I hope thee will be able to ride up to our place some time. It is lovely now — the emerald of the lawn, the pear

and peach and cherry bloom, the yellow clusters of the sycamore maples, and the white glory of the magnolias. The love of natural beauty with me seems to grow stronger as I grow older.

"The Vision of Echard, and Other Poems," was published in 1878. It included "The Witch of Wenham," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," and ten other poems. Among them was "The Henchman," sent to Mr. Howells, for the "Atlantic," in February, 1877, with this note: —

"Mr. Lathrop wrote me in regard to a bit of rhyme (which I wrote off-hand for a young friend) [1] which Mr. Osgood wishes to set to music. I am doubtful about it being worthy of a place in the magazine, and besides, it is quite out of my line. If you think it will do, however, I will not object. It will perhaps need no title. I called it 'The Henchman's Song,' but the first line of the first verse will answer as well."

He recalled this poem from the "Atlantic," for some reason, and several months afterwards sent it to the "Independent," in which it was published,

[1] Mrs. Jettie Morrill Wason, daughter of Hon. George W. Morrill, of Amesbury, neighbors and dear friends of Mr. Whittier. Miss Morrill said to him one day, when they were summering on the Bearcamp, "Mr. Whittier, you never wrote a love song. I do not believe you *can* write one. I would like to have you try to write one for me to sing." He handed her *The Henchman's Song* the next day, and it was first sung by the charming young lady for whom it was written. One other poem was written for her, and this also was written at his favorite summer resort, West Ossipee. The first boat placed in the Bearcamp waters was named the Jettie, in honor of Miss Morrill, and the *Voyage of the Jettie* commemorated the event.

December 20, 1877. This note to Dr. Ward, the editor, went with it: —

"I send, in compliance with the wish of Mr. Bowen and thyself, a ballad upon which, though not long, I have bestowed a good deal of labor. It is not exactly a Quakerly piece, nor is it didactic, and it has no moral that I know of. But it is, I think, *natural*, simple, and not unpoetical."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

DANVERS, 3d mo., 7, 1879.

Back from my home in Amesbury. What a pity it is that we cannot shut down the gate, and let the weary wheels rest awhile! For myself, I have to work hard to be idle; I have to make it a matter of duty to ignore duty; and amuse myself with simple stories, play with dogs and cattle, and talk nonsense. Dr. Bowditch says that a man of active brain ought to make a fool of himself occasionally, and unbend, at all hazards to his dignity. But to some of us life is too serious, and its responsibilities too awful, for such a remedy. The unsolved mystery presses hard upon us.

TO HARRIET M. PITMAN.

1879.

I am greatly pained to hear of the illness of our old friend Garrison. For how many years he has been an important part of our world! Much of my own life was shaped by him. It is very sad to think I shall see him no more. The next mail may bring tidings of his death. I have been thinking over my life, and the survey has not been

encouraging. Alas! if I have been a servant at all I have been an unprofitable one, and yet I have loved goodness, and longed to bring my imaginative poetic temperament into true subjection. I stand ashamed and almost despairing before holy and pure ideals. As I read the New Testament I feel how weak, irresolute, and frail I am, and how little I can rely on anything save our God's mercy and infinite compassion, which I reverently and thankfully own have followed me through life, and the assurance of which is my sole ground of hope for myself, and for those I love and pray for.

The following letter to Lydia Maria Child was written upon Mr. Whittier's return from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in Portland, in June, 1879. The Pocasset tragedy, to which it refers, was the insane act of a father, who killed his child in emulation of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac: —

"Returning from our Yearly Meeting, I was glad to welcome once more thy handwriting. I did not see thee at our dear Garrison's funeral. Was thee there? It was a most impressive occasion. Phillips outdid himself, and Theodore Weld, under the stress of powerful emotion, renewed that marvelous eloquence which, in the early days of anti-slavery, shamed the church and silenced the mob. I never heard anything more beautiful and more moving. Garrison's faith in the continuity of life was very positive. He trusted more to the phenomena of spiritualism than I can, however. My faith is not helped by them, and yet I wish I

could see *truth* in them. I do believe, apart from all outward signs, in the future life, and that the happiness of that life, as of this, will consist in labor and self-sacrifice. In this sense, as thee say, 'there is no death.' I trust with thee that the wretched Pocasset horror will teach all honest expounders the folly and danger of going back to the stone age for models of right living. I am shocked by the barbarism and superstition of our popular faith. There needs another George Fox, with broader vision, to call men from the death of the letter to the life of the spirit, and to tread under foot the ghastly and bloody materialism which survives among us."

TO DOROTHEA L. DIX.

28th, 7th mo., 1879.

I thank thee for the curious Abyssinian book, which will be returned with this note. How strange! King *Theodore's* bible! It recalls the wonder with which I read, when a boy, Bruce's Travels to the source of the Nile. I cannot recall the Arabic inscription I referred to, for the fountain, and have written one myself, taking it for granted that the fountain was to be thy gift, though thee did not say so. Such a gift would not be inappropriate from one who all her life has been opening fountains in the desert of human suffering — who, to use Scripture phrase, has "passed over the dry valley of Baca, making it a well."

Stranger and traveler!
Drink freely, and bestow
A kindly thought on her,
Who bade this fountain flow,

Yet hath for it no claim
Save as the minister
Of blessing in God's name.

TO CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

1879.

I suppose nine out of ten of really thoughtful people, were they to express their real feeling, would speak much as thee do, of the mingled "dread and longing" with which they look forward to the inevitable surrender of life. Of course, temperament and present surroundings have much influence with us. There are some self-satisfied souls who, as Charles Lamb says, "can stalk into futurity on stilts," but there are more Fearings and Despondencys than Greathearts in view of the "loss of all we know." I have heard Garrison talk much of his faith in Spiritualism. He had no doubts whatever, and he was very happy. Death was to him but the passing from one room to another and higher one. But his *facts* did not convince me. I am slow to believe new things, and in a matter of such tremendous interest, I want "assurance doubly sure." I wonder whether, if I could see a real ghost, I should believe my own senses. I do sometimes feel very near to dear ones who have left me — perhaps they are with me then. I am sure they would be, if it were possible. Of one thing I feel sure: that something outside of myself speaks to me, and holds me to duty; warns, reproves, and approves. It is good, for it requires me to be good; it is wise, for it knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is to me a revelation of God, and of his character and attributes: the

one important *fact*, before which all others seem insignificant. I have seen little or nothing of what is called Spiritualism: I do not think its fruits have always been good; but the best things may be abused and counterfeited. . . . I wish there were a possibility of knowing what it really is.

I have no longer youth and strength, and I have not much to hope for, as far as this life is concerned; but I enjoy life: "It is a pleasant thing to behold the sun." I love Nature in her varied aspects; and, as I grow older, I find much to love in my fellow-creatures, and also more to pity. I have the instinct of immortality, but the conditions of that life are unknown. I cannot conceive what my own identity and that of dear ones gone before me will be. And then the unescapable sense of sin in thought and deed, and doubtless some misconception of the character of God, makes the boldest of us cowards. Does thee remember the epitaph-prayer of Martin Elginbrod?

> "Here lie I, Martin Elginbrod;
> Have pity on my soul, Lord God,
> As I wad do were I Lord God
> An' ye were Martin Elginbrod."

I think there is a volume of comfort in that verse. We Christians seem less brave and tranquil, in view of death, than the old Stoic sages. Witness Marcus Antoninus. I wonder if the creed of Christendom is really the "glad tidings of great joy to all people" which the angels sang of. For myself, I believe in God as Justice, Goodness, Tenderness — in one word, Love; and yet, my trust in Him is not strong enough to overcome the natural

shrinking from the law of death. Even our Master prayed that that cup might pass from Him, "if it were possible."

TO MARY ROGERS KIMBALL.[1]

8th mo., 3, 1879.

I am very glad to hear from thee and thy excellent mother. I have a very pleasant recollection of the visit thee speak of at the farm, a little out of the village of Plymouth, and also of my first visit at thy father's house in the village, with George Thompson, in 1835. How far back it seems! As I muse over the past, I always recall thy father with affectionate memory of his life and labors. He was very dear to me — a man whom to know was to love. His collected editorials are always at hand, with the fine picture of his beautiful and expressive face. I am thankful that I can still enjoy much, that Nature is as beautiful to me as ever, that I have many dear friends left, and that I hope to meet those who have gone before, — Sumner, Garrison, Wilson, Greeley, Chase, Tappan, and others of anti-slavery renown who have passed away. Give my love to thy dear mother, and accept for thyself the affectionate regard of thine and thy father's friend.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

AT THE BEARCAMP, 8th mo., 1879.

I am feeling sadly about Horace.[2] But he is only going the common way of all, sooner or later,

[1] Daughter of N. P. Rogers.

[2] Horace H. Currier, a dear friend of Whittier, who died within a few weeks of the writing of this letter.

and "who knoweth which is best?" I have reached an age when the shadow of the Eternal World rests upon all the pictures of this, and the thought of the "last time" mingles with all greetings and farewells. My life has been marked by undeserved blessings, and my prayer is that the mercies of our Heavenly Father, which endure forever, may be extended to me still — in life or death.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

1879.

I am glad to get thy charming book from thy own hand. I have read "Deephaven" over half a dozen times, and always with gratitude to thee for such a book — so simple, pure, and so true to nature. And "Old Friends and New" I shall certainly read as often. When tired and worried I resort to thy books and find rest and refreshing. I recommend them to everybody, and everybody likes them. There is no dissenting opinion; and already thousands whom thee have never seen love the author as well as her books.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

DANVERS, 12th mo., 17, 1879.

Thy note received the evening before my birthday made me very happy. Among the many kind greetings which reach me on this anniversary, thine has been most welcome, for a word of praise from thee is prized more highly than all, though I do not undervalue any one's love or friendship. I have often since I met thee in Boston thought of thy remark that we four singers seem to be iso-

lated — set apart as it were — in lonely companionship, garlanded as if for sacrifice, the world about us waiting to see who first shall falter in his song, who first shall pass out of the sunshine into the great shadow! There is something pathetic in it all. I feel like clasping closer the hands of my companions. I realize more and more that fame and notoriety can avail little in our situation; that love is the one essential thing, always welcome, outliving time and change, and going with us into the unguessed possibilities of death. There is nothing so sweet in the old Bible as the declaration that "God is Love." I am no Calvinist, but I feel in looking over my life — double-motived and full of failures — that I cannot rely upon word or work of mine to offset sins and shortcomings, but upon Love alone.

Dear H., we began together in Buckingham's "Magazine," and together we are keeping step in the "Atlantic." Not evenly, indeed, for thy step is lighter and freer than mine. How many who began with us have fallen by the way! The cypress shadows lie dark about us, but I think thee contrive to keep in the low westering sunshine more than I can. A dear cousin of mine, a lady of fine culture — Gertrude Whittier Cartland — who has been for some years clerk of the Women's Yearly Meeting of our Friends' Society, writes me: "I thought the poem of Dr. Holmes touchingly beautiful — such an undertone of tender thoughtfulness, not to be silenced by the strains of surface gratulations of flattery. I place 'The Iron Gate' beside Bryant's 'Flood of Years' and

Longfellow's 'Morituri Salutamus.'" God bless thee, old friend and comrade!

TO EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

12th mo., 31, 1879.

I have been looking over thy beautiful volume. I was familiar with a large number of the poems, but many were entirely new to me. It is a collection of which any poet might well be proud. While I admire the strength and power of the elegiac poems, and the war pieces, I am especially charmed with the graceful and tender idyls. . . . My work, such as it is, is done. Thine has only begun; but its present achievement makes the future success sure. Indeed, if thee never write another stanza, thy place is assured in American literature, as the worthy successor of Bryant. There is one poem in thy volume which has the stamp of immortality upon it. "The Discoverer" has always seemed to me one of the most striking and powerfully suggestive poems of our time.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

2d mo., 23, 1880.

I inclose Professor Swing's last sermon, which I think will interest thee. I hope to be in Amesbury next week, but must go first to Boston. I also send Dr. Meredith's article in the "Alliance," on the "Proposition of United Prayer for the Conversion of Satan." The old Catholic saint and schoolman once tried this, praying for three days and nights continuously for the Devil's conversion, and rose up at last with the hope that

he had succeeded. Augustine Jones's article on Moses Brown is a very clear and full account of that remarkable man. It recalled to me the picture of him as I saw him in 1833 or '34, when I read to him, at his request, the "Speech of the Premier on the Passage of the Emancipation Act in England." He must have been then in his ninety-fourth or ninety-fifth year.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

2d mo., 20, 1880.

I am old enough to be done with work, only that I feel that my best words have not been said after all, that what has been said is not its full expression. All is incomplete, and I must wait for the fresh, strong life of immortality, in the hope that through the mercy of Him who "knoweth our frame" and our weaknesses, I may be enabled to do better with the talent He has given me than I have done.

TO JAMES T. FIELDS.

3d mo., 17, 1880.

A friend gives me a sad account of ——. His property is under a mortgage of more than it will sell for, and the poor fellow is helplessly sick and discouraged. He has a large family, and when the bank forecloses, he will have no shelter. We "literary fellows" are none of us rich, but can we not do something for him? Curtis and Holland, Clemens and Warner, I am sure would do what they could, and we of Boston and vicinity would, I think, help a little. He was foolish in his exper-

iment, but I pardon a great deal to a lover of beauty who tries to make his spot of earth beautiful. Of course the thing must be done with delicate regard to his feelings, if at all. If we could raise $4000 or $5000 it would put a roof over his head at least. Can we not throw a plank to the drowning man? Think of it. Life is slipping away from us fast, and we must do our little good while we can. The trouble is, there are so many hard cases, so many sad appeals made to us, that we can do but little in any one direction.[1] I inclose a bit of rhyme ["The Minister's Daughter"] which I do not pretend is poetry, but the grimmest kind of realism. I feel it a duty to remind the extravagant eulogists of the old Calvinism of some of its doings.

TO JAMES R. OSGOOD.[2]

22d, 7th mo., 1880.

I have looked over thy list of noteworthy events, but have concluded to take as subject for a poem the missive of Charles II. to Governor Endicott, in 1661, sent by Samuel Shattuck, a Quaker, of Salem, forbidding the further persecution of the Quakers. Shattuck had been banished from the country on pain of death, went to Eng-

[1] Mr. Whittier presented this case to Mr. George W. Childs, who at once promised $1000. Whittier offered $250. The person to be relieved was not one with whom he was personally acquainted.

[2] This letter was written in answer to a call for a poem for the *Memorial History of Boston*. In the first volume of this work, "The King's Missive" was placed at the opening, fully illustrated.

land, and was made the king's agent to convey the royal mandate to Massachusetts. It may make from a hundred to a hundred and twenty lines. I do not know whether it should have a place in the first or second volume — probably the incident would be in the second.

Upon the appearance of the ballad "The King's Missive," there was a discussion as to its historical accuracy, at a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and Rev. Dr. George E. Ellis, of Boston, afterward read a paper before that society to show that the letter of Charles II. did not have the effect ascribed to it in the ballad; that it did not require and did not bring about a general jail delivery, but requested that one class of imprisoned Quakers should be sent to England for trial, which was not complied with. Incidentally, Dr. Ellis spoke of the Quakers as glorying in their persecution, and inviting it by their seditious and indecent behavior. To this paper Mr. Whittier made reply in an article sent to the Boston "Advertiser," in March, 1881, which is given in the Appendix to this work as a specimen of his vigorous prose style.

TO SYDNEY HOWARD GAY.

9th mo., 24, 1880.

In 1838, I was in Philadelphia, editor of the Pennsylvania "Freeman," and my office was burned with Pennsylvania Hall. I was by the side of thy wife's father, Daniel Neall, who presided at the anti-slavery meeting the night before

the burning, while the mob was pressing in at the doors, and the glass of the broken windows was shattered over him. I have never forgotten the dignity and firmness with which he held his place on that occasion. . . . I am glad of an opportunity to express my thanks for the justice done to the early Friends in thy history. Rev. Dr. Ellis of Boston has written an article for the new "History of Boston," in which he labors to show that the Quakers were as much to blame for being hanged as the Puritans were for hanging them. Give my regards to thy wife, and tell her that I have just had a visit from her brother and Edward Wright. It was very pleasant to talk over with them the old days of the anti-slavery struggle, and the dear friends with whom we acted.

TO ELIZABETH S. JONES.

10th mo., 23d, 1880.

Thanks for the Swinburne "Tragedy of the Footstool."[1] Browning's rugged verse and Swinburne's marvelous rhythmic felicities are perfectly reproduced, and the comical absurdity of the action of the piece is irresistibly droll. I think I would send Browning a copy. I am sure he would enjoy it. How it would have delighted our dear friend, Bayard Taylor! . . . Have the leaves in the vicinity of Portland taken on the autumn tints? Here they are scarcely changed, and I fear the display this year will be a poor one. But the asters and

[1] A satirical poem, by Miss Jones, published in the *Portland Press*, reproducing the styles of Browning and Swinburne, which was highly praised by Browning, when at Whittier's suggestion a copy was sent to him.

gentians and goldenrod are abundant, and I never tire of them, glorifying as they do every winding roadside and rocky pasture slope of New England. The hardy little harebell still blossoms in the Oak Knoll grounds, as it does on the banks of the Merrimac, in Amesbury.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

DANVERS, 11th mo., 29, 1880.

I thought of thee on Thanksgiving Day, and wondered if thee was at the table. It was a rather dull day to me, for on such occasions I always think of the old days in Amesbury, when my mother and sister were with me. Thy friend B. has written me saying he is done with politics. He feels rather sore about his defeat; but I told him I had been in the same predicament as a Free-Soil candidate for Congress, and got abused worse than he did, for I was charged with ill-treating my wife!

In 1880, Mr. Whittier wrote an introduction for a volume entitled "William Lloyd Garrison and His Times." In the same year his "River Path" appeared as one of the four poems in "Christmastide." "The King's Missive," which originally appeared in "The Memorial History of Boston," was published, with other poems, in 1881. The history of one of these poems, "The Jubilee Singers," is as follows: —

In November, 1879, the Jubilee Singers of the Fisk University called upon Mr. Whittier, and were received in the "garden room" at Amesbury.

The interview was much enjoyed by the poet as well as by the singers. He was interested in the romantic story of their successes in Europe; there they had sung before seven kings and emperors, and had dined with Gladstone, but on returning to this country they had been driven from a hotel at midnight because they were black. As they were about to leave Mr. Whittier they sang several of their sweetest songs, ending with "Swing low, sweet chariot," and the benediction, —

> "The Lord bless thee and keep thee,
> The Lord make his face shine upon thee,
> And be gracious unto thee,
> The Lord lift up his countenance
> Upon thee, and give thee peace. Amen."

He listened with bowed head, and tears rolled down his cheeks. Mr. Loudin says: "It was with great difficulty we could sing, so deeply were we touched by the experience of the hour now closing. I shall never forget the expression upon that illumined face at that parting moment. Whittier stepped forward and shook hands, but so deep were his feelings that he spoke no word until he came to the last, when he said, 'God bless you all! Good-by.'" The next morning he wrote four stanzas in their album, to which he afterward added two more, and gave the title "The Jubilee Singers."

The poem "Abram Morrison" was written for a little paper called "The Social Banner," issued in aid of a charitable fair in Amesbury, in 1884. The paper was to be printed on Monday, and not a line of the poem was written on Saturday. When

one of the lady managers of the fair received the manuscript early Monday morning, she had the curiosity to ask when it was composed, hinting her opinion that Whittier had stayed at home from meeting on First day to write it. But he assured her that he attended meeting and made his usual calls that day, and left her to infer that the lines about the Irish Quaker were composed in the meeting, where it would be easy to conjure up a reminiscent image of Friend Morrison, as in this stanza: —

> "Still, in memory, on his feet,
> Leaning o'er the elders' seat,
> Mingling with a solemn drone
> Celtic accents all his own,
> Rises Abram Morrison."

This guess is the only foundation for the statement that he sometimes composed his verses in the quiet of the Friends' meeting, unless we except the case of "Laus Deo," elsewhere mentioned.

To an inquiry about the legend of the Greenleaf family referred to in "A Name," Mr. Whittier wrote: —

"I have for a long time heard the tradition of it. In the Genealogy of the Greenleaf family occurs this passage: 'From all that can be gathered it is believed that the ancestors of the Greenleaf family were Huguenots, who left France on account of their religious principles in the course of the sixteenth century, and settled in England. The name was probably translated from the French *Feuillevert*.' Marot was a somewhat celebrated French poet of the sixteenth century. He was in-

clined to the Protestant faith, and wrote the hymns of the Huguenots. I am not sure that the old Greenleaf embarked from the port of St. Malo; but as that was the port from whence many of the persecuted exiles came, I took the liberty of using it in my verse. I inclose an interesting account of the French Acadians, in the Madawaska region, in which the habit of the people in changing their names for the English equivalent is mentioned — just as 'Feuillevert' became 'Greenleaf.' The writer says: 'They have a singular fancy for Anglicizing their names. At the Grand Falls, Napoleon Bois figures on a sign as Napoleon Woods; Le Blanc becomes White, St. Pierre St. Peter, and Fabien becomes Do-Well.' "

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

1st mo., 1881.

I am much concerned for the poor colored people who are crowding into Kansas in this bitter winter. I think they better stay in their old homes, but it will not do to let them starve and freeze. There is great need of money and clothing. Our Quaker friend Elizabeth L. Comstock is working hard at Topeka, and doing a great deal with comparatively small means. How much of sin and want and pain there is in the world! I wonder if it is all necessary, — if it cannot be helped. The terrible mystery sometimes oppresses me, but I hold fast my faith in God's goodness, and the ultimate triumph of that goodness. I know in my own experience that some things which seemed evil have proved good, or the means of good.

TO CELIA THAXTER.[1]

1st mo., 18, 1881.

What wonderful pictures you will bring home to hang in the gallery of memory! I am sorry you did not see more of the Alps, but I have known people to go hunting all over Switzerland for weeks and not find them. I do not care at all to see Rome, or Paris, or London. . . . Thy graphic description of the storm at Appledore made me sorry I was not there to see it, and in the evening to sit with you by your pleasant flowers and drift-wood fire. I remember the storm thee speak of. The touching story of the child's burial must not be omitted in "the book" which, as the Orientals say, it is thy kismet, or destiny, to write some time. The lines quoted by thee are resonant with all sea-sounds. I like the rain calming the sea, —

> "till sullenly plunged the surges
> Leaden and deadly white where the crests broke afar
> in the distance."

Will thee hand this "Pickwick" to thy good brothers? Just look at the picture of Mr. P.'s trial and Sergeant Buzfuz pleading for that injured innocent, Mrs. Bardell. Tell Oscar my niece is proud and happy with her loon's feather.

TO GERTRUDE WHITTIER CARTLAND.

1st mo., 26, 1881.

I expected to hear of William Ashby's speedy departure. I have known him for nearly fifty years, — an upright, honest man, and a constant and active friend of the oppressed. Remember

[1] Upon her return from Europe.

me to his wife, and assure her of my sympathy. Her husband will leave an honorable memory behind him. His love of flowers and of all natural beauty was a marked characteristic, and he was always a gentleman, courteous and affable.

TO ELIZABETH (NEALL) GAY.

1st mo., 27, 1881.

When February opens I shall feel as if winter was losing its iron grip. The long nights are tedious, especially to one who can't sleep soundly. I always envied Maryatt's "Peter Simple," who could "bear a great deal of sleep." I cannot read in the evening, and not long in the daytime. . . . I have friends in Florida who supply me bountifully with its golden fruit. I only wish their atmosphere came with the oranges. . . . A note from George William Curtis mentioned spending an evening with you a few days ago. It must be exceedingly pleasant to have him for a neighbor. He tells me that Mr. Gay is writing the Life of Edmund Quincy, of which I am very glad. He can and will do justice to the cause to which Quincy devoted his fine talents, and in which he himself bore a brave and self-sacrificing part. I have been suffering for some weeks with a lame knee — a sprain, I suppose — and for the first time in my life have found a cane necessary; and even with that I am mostly confined to the house. I enjoy books and friends, and my interest in public affairs is active. I have to see a great many people, who contrive to get to me, though I am a part of the time in my old home in Amesbury. They

are mostly strangers, but my friends in Boston, Dr. Holmes and others, do not forget me. I had a pleasant visit from Phillips Brooks and Archdeacon Farrar, when the latter was in the country last fall.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

March 6, 1881.

I have sweetened this Sunday afternoon by reading the poems in the precious little volume you sent me a few days ago. Some were new to me, — others, as you ought to know, are well known. I have not forgotten your kind words for my evening breakfast. If you happen to have seen an article in the March — or was it February? — "North American," you will have noticed, it may be, my reference to "The Minister's Daughter," and to yourself as preaching the Gospel of Love to a larger congregation than any minister addresses. I never rise from any of your poems without feeling the refreshment of their free and sweet atmosphere. I may find more perfume in one than in another, — as one does in passing from one flowery field into the next. I may find more careful planting in this or in that, as in different garden-beds, but there is always the morning air of a soul that breathes freely, and always the fragrance of a loving spirit. Again that sweetest "Minister's Daughter" brought the tears into my eyes — and out of them. Again I read with emotion that generous tribute ["The Lost Occasion"] to the man whom living we so longed to admire without a reservation — of whom, dead, you write

with such a noble humanity. I must not speak too warmly of the lines whose kindness I feel so deeply, only wishing I had deserved such a tribute better. But of the poem which comes next, "Garrison," I can speak, and I will say that it has the strenuous tone, the grave music of your highest mood, — which I believe is the truest and best expression of the New England inner life which it has ever found, at least in versified utterance. I have forgotten to thank you for remembering me, — and especially for the way in which you remember me, for I did not miss the words which made my blood warm, as I read them on the fly-leaf. Let me say — for it means more than you can know — that no written or printed words come into our household on which my wife, a very true-hearted woman, looks with so much interest as on yours.

TO FRANCES C. SPARHAWK.

4th mo., 2, 1881.

I like the "Little Pilgrim's" story better than Dante's picture of Heaven, — an old man sitting eternally on a high chair, and concentric circles of saints, martyrs, and ordinary church members, whirling around him in perpetual gyration, and singing "Glory!" Ah, me! it is idle to speculate on these things. All I ask for is to be free from sin, and to meet the dear ones again. . . . I have just sent a poem ["Rabbi Ishmael"] to the "Atlantic," which perhaps nobody will like. But I do, and that is enough, as I wrote it to free my mind.

TO MARSHALL P. HALL, MANCHESTER.

5th mo., 11, 1881.

The lady of the poem "Among the Hills" was purely imaginary. I was charmed with the scenery in Tamworth and West Ossipee, and tried to call attention to it in a story. My old haunt there, the Bearcamp House, is burned down, much to my regret. . . . I hope another house will be built on its site. With the long range of the Sandwich Mountains and Chocorua on one hand, and the rugged masses of Ossipee on the other, it is really one of the most picturesque situations in the State. I think thy wife may well be proud of her native hills.

In the summer of 1881, Mr. Whittier spent several weeks with his cousins, Joseph and Gertrude W. Cartland, at Intervale, N. H., and continued to be their summer companion among the hills during the remaining twelve years of his life. In this charming spot he greatly enjoyed the utter quiet of the long meadow levels and the mountains beyond, watching the snow streaks on Mount Washington, and wishing he could see it all covered as in winter. The pine woods, near the hotel, more like the "forest primeval" than can often be found in places so much frequented by summer guests, were a favorite resort, where, with the underbrush cleared away by his own hand, and rustic seats prepared, he spent a part of nearly every day, with a group of friends, in the unconventional social intercourse which he always so highly prized.

When traveling, his eyes insisted upon seeing every landscape on the route, and studying the faces of his fellow-travelers. Hence railway traveling was found very fatiguing, especially in a region with which he was not perfectly familiar. After passing through the Notch of the White Mountains, on a railroad train, he spoke of the experience as one which he never wished to repeat; contrasting it with the leisurely passage of a stage-coach through the Notch some years before, which he greatly enjoyed. He rarely entered a railroad car without passing through it to take a view of his fellow-passengers, and if anything struck him as odd or amusing he was sure to observe and refer to it afterward. He took a sympathetic interest in every phase of humanity. At the summer hotels he was often to be seen on the piazza when trains and stages arrived and departed, and without any apparent inquisitiveness his keen eyes took note of everything, and his shrewd and humorous comments upon the events of the day were the delight of those privileged with his intimacy.

Mr. Whittier did not care to ascend mountains for the prospect they afforded. When asked if he had ever viewed Lake Winnepesaukee and its surroundings from Red Hill, he said he had never any desire to do so; that he once looked down upon the scene from a neighboring hill and found it had lost its impressiveness. Boulders had become pebbles, great trees seemed as scraggy bushes, and the lake itself a mere pond. The whole scene was dwarfed, its grandeur lost.

Whenever Mr. Whittier was stopping at a hotel,

other guests had the opportunity to meet him in the parlors, or upon the piazzas, for he never secluded himself. When in a public room, he made it a rule to devote his time to those who wished to converse with him.

"What do people live on here?" asked Mr. Whittier in a little settlement among the mountains, where nobody seemed to be doing anything. "They live by keeping quiet," was the reply; and this was a neighborhood the poet loved to visit. He said he disliked, when he was himself taking a rest, to come upon busy people, and he was once annoyed by noticing that a blacksmith was setting up his forge near the hotel where he was spending his summer. But he said he found he need not worry — the man got nothing to do!

To a young lady, an invalid, who had gone to the mountains for her health, he wrote: —

"I hope thee will like the place and be benefited. But nobody gets well who has to dress for dinner. Thee should have taken only a single dress and worn it all the time, and take no thought wherewithal thee shall be clothed. That 's the way."

His fondness for children and young people was a marked trait in his character. The young people of Amesbury were always welcome guests at his home, and he was seldom too busy to lay aside his work for a few moments' pleasant talk. During his many summerings at West Ossipee, accompanied by his niece, he generally invited some of her Amesbury friends to join them, and nothing could be more charming than to see him surrounded by a bevy of young girls, listening to their merri-

ment, arranging for their excursions, telling them stories, calling their attention to good books, and in all possible ways planning for their amusement and profit. Several of his poems, such as "Neighbor Acres," "How they climbed Chocorua," "Voyage of the Jettie," "The Seeking of the Waterfall," and "The Henchman," some of which have never been published, were written for their amusement, or at their suggestion. Later on, wherever he might be, whether at Holderness, Danvers, or Newburyport, he soon gathered a flock of young people around him, in whom he took a lively interest, and who have gratefully appreciated the influence of his beautiful life.

When among his friends he loved to listen to the singing of simple ballads, but he usually avoided an expression of interest in them as music. His compliment to the singer would be, "Thy voice is very sweet."

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

8th mo., 1881.

It is a dark, rainy day — one of the most *canine* of the dog-days. But in our "garden room" the flower-vases remind us of the green places visited in the sunshine of the last few days. Will they not be familiar, too, to thee? Here are graceful bluebells from the Merrimac bank near the Chain Bridge; gorgeous goldenrod from the picturesque and quiet Salisbury burial-ground hill; sweet white cones of the water-bush, from the woods near the Salisbury beach; splendid spikes of the cardinal flower from the banks of the Powow River; and others suggestive of equally interesting localities,

where we twa hae talked and laughed and moralized together.

TO EDMUND C. STEDMAN.

8th mo., 7, 1881.

I have just been re-reading thy magnificent "Corda Concordia," and I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of pronouncing it the best occasional poem of the last quarter of a century. There is not a weak or superfluous verse in it; not too much or too little; it stands complete. I dare say others more competent to speak than myself have told thee this before, but I must acknowledge the very great pleasure which it has given me. It has the antique beauty of the old Masters of Song, while it gives utterance to the earnest but reverent spirit of an age of Question.

TO KATHERINE H. AUSTIN.

8th mo., 10, 1881.

I shall be glad to do all in my power to open the doors of Brown University to women. I inclose a note to Richard Atwater which I will thank thee to forward to him. Of course the world is growing better; the Lord reigns; our old planet is wheeling slowly into fuller light. I despair of nothing good. All will come in due time that is really needed. All we have to do is to work — and wait.

TO RICHARD ATWATER.

I hope the time is not far distant when Brown University will be open to woman. The traditions of the noble old institution are all in favor of broad liberality and equality of rights and privi-

leges. The state of my health and the increasing weight of years may prevent me from taking an active part in the matter, but it would be a great satisfaction to give my voice in behalf of a measure which I feel certain would redound to the honor, and materially promote the prosperity, of the college. Brown University cannot afford to hesitate much longer in a matter, like this, of simple justice. No one who has felt the pulse of public opinion can doubt that the time has come when a liberal educational policy irrespective of sex is not only a duty, but a necessity.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

October 18, 1881.

I have worn the same glasses for twenty years. I am getting somewhat hard of hearing — "slightly deaf," the newspapers inform me, with that polite attention to a personal infirmity which is characteristic of the newspaper press. The dismantling of the human organism is a gentle process more obvious to those who look on than to those who are the subjects of it. It brings some solaces with it; deafness is a shield; infirmity makes those around us helpful; incapacity unloads our shoulders; and imbecility, if it must come, is always preceded by the administration of one of nature's opiates. It is a good deal that we older writers, whose names are often mentioned together, should have passed the Psalmist's limit of active life, and yet have an audience when we speak or sing. I wish you all the blessings you have asked for me — how much better you deserve them!

TO MRS. MARY F. ROGERS.

11th mo., 29, 1881.

I hear that thy birthday comes early in the next month, a little before mine; and I cannot let the occasion pass without sending a word of greeting from an old friend of thine and of thy dear and good husband, whose memory is kept green by all who knew him personally, or who felt the inspiration of his genius, and the noble example of his self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of freedom. How vividly I recall the visit which dear George Thompson and myself made at your beautiful home in the village of Plymouth, more than forty years ago! We left you then to fall into the hands of the mob at Concord, and escaped only after rough handling. What a "certain sound" rang out from the bugle of his "Herald of Freedom"! How it cheered us in the long, hard struggle! To have had the heart-felt friendship of such a man is to me, in the late afternoon of life, a very precious memory. To thee, dear friend, his loved companion, his memory is a priceless legacy. I am almost alone now — most of my relations and old friends have passed onward. But I love to recall my fellow-workers and the old anti-slavery days. I hope thee are in comfortable health, and that thy last years may be blest.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 18, 1881.

It was most kind in thee to send the flowers, and my heart thanks thee more than any pen can. These mile-stones at my age are rather serious

things, and happy is he who in passing them sees them as I have done, wreathed with flowers, symbols and prophecies of the immortality of love and friendship.

TO ELIZABETH S. JONES.

12th mo., 19, 1881.

I spent my birthday quietly and soberly with two old friends who dined with me. I confess I do not *enjoy* these anniversaries. They are solemn reminders of the inevitable end; and I love this old world of ours, and the sweet familiar scenes and dear human faces, too well to be quite ready to leave them. But all as God wills. I will trust and wait.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

DANVERS, 2d mo., 1882.

I wonder how I can reconcile myself to the old, customary life here, after my pleasant stay in Boston, and our delightful companionship there. I cannot make thee understand how grateful and refreshing it all was and how much I thank thee for it. I did not leave the city until Thursday morning. My brother has been very ill, but is now somewhat, though I fear not permanently, better. The last of our family, he is a kind, unselfish man, whose way of life has been hard and difficult. For the last fifteen years he has been connected with the Naval Office in Boston. . . . I must tell thee how much I have enjoyed that queer, good "Vicar of Hermanstow."[1] I have seen nothing so good for a long time. For it, and for much more, I thank thee.

[1] By S. Baring Gould.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

3d mo., 24, 1882.

With regard to modern Spiritualism I have had a feeling that it was not safe or healthful for mind or body to yield myself to an influence the nature of which was unknown. There is a fascination in it, but the fascination is blended with doubt and repulsion. I am disgusted with the tricks and greed of these mediums; their pretended spiritual intercourse has none of the conditions which Tennyson's "In Memoriam" describes, and I do not know that I really need additional proof of the life hereafter. I think my loved ones are still living and awaiting me. And I wait and trust. And yet how glad and grateful I should be to *know!* I must believe that our friends are near us — that they still love and watch over us.

TO HIS NIECE, MRS. PICKARD.

3d mo., 1882.

The death of a man like Longfellow is a national loss. He has been an influence for good; all the Christian virtues his verse and his life exemplified. Pure, kindly, and courteous, simple yet scholarly, he was never otherwise than a gentleman. There is no blot on the crystal purity of his writings. His fame is secure, and is likely to increase in the future. I cannot imagine a time when his songs shall cease to be loved and cherished. "Peace to the good man's memory! Let it grow green with years and blossom through the night of centuries."

TO T. B. ALDRICH.

3d mo., 28, 1882.

It seems as if I could never write again. A feeling of unutterable sorrow and loneliness oppresses me. I must leave to thee or Dr. Holmes the poem for the "Atlantic." I have written a few verses for the next number of the "Wide Awake," in reference to the celebration of Longfellow's last birthday by the children, and do not feel that I can do any more at present, if ever. Our circle is awfully narrowing. We must close our thinned ranks and stand closer to each other. As Wordsworth says: —

> "Like clouds that rake the mountain's summit,
> As waves that know no guiding hand,
> So swift has brother followed brother,
> From sunshine to the sunless land!"

The following lines were written at the Asquam House, in the summer of 1882, on the fly-leaf of a volume of Longfellow's poems, in the possession of Mrs. Martha Nichols: —

> "Hushed now the sweet consoling tongue
> Of him whose lyre the Muses strung;
> His last low swan-song has been sung!
>
> "His last! And ours, dear friend, is near;
> As clouds that rake the mountains here,
> We too shall pass and disappear.
>
> "Yet howsoever changed or tost,
> Not even a wreath of mist is lost,
> No atom can itself exhaust.
>
> "So shall the soul's superior force
> Live on and run its endless course
> In God's unlimited universe.

"And we, whose brief reflections seem
To fade like clouds from lake and stream,
Shall brighten in a holier beam."

TO DOROTHEA L. DIX.

4th mo., 7, 1882.

It gave us all great pleasure to hear directly from thee once more. We had heard of thy illness, but did not know where a letter would find thee. I am glad to know thou art with kind friends, and as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. Thou hast done so much for others that it is right for thee now, in age and illness, to be kindly ministered to. He who has led thee in thy great work of benevolence will never leave thee nor forsake thee. With a feeling of almost painful unworthiness I read thy over-kind words as regards myself. I wish I could feel that I deserved them. But compared with such a life as thine, my own seems poor and inadequate. But none the less do I thank thee for thy generous appreciation.

TO SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

5th mo., 1882.

How kind it was in thee to write me amidst the worries and cares of preparation for thy flitting across the water; and to add to all thy troubles the necessity of entertaining dull company by inviting me to South Berwick. I know it would be wickedly selfish for me to accept such an invitation; but I certainly should do so if I could. Fortunately for thee I have been kept back by illness, and the northeast winds blowing over all the icebergs between here and the Pole. And

then I must be in Amesbury next week, in attendance upon our Quaker Quarterly Meeting, and to meet my niece Lizzie, and my brother if he is able to get there. So I must let thee go with my written benediction and with grateful thanks for thy books, and still more for thyself.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

5th mo., 18, 1882.

Why should thee wish to step out of the line of march? Why envy those who fall by the way? So long as the east winds do not torment thee and thee can go a-Maying in the coldest rainstorm that ever blew over Andover hill, life must be worth living. And it would not be worth so much to some of us, if thee deserted us. I wish thee would think of that, and hold on. I take it, the east wind is the "Sanser" wind of death which the Mohammedans say will blow over the earth in the last days. I am groaning (inaudibly) with neuralgic pains, and longing for a change in the weathercock, which is rusted east.

The summer of 1882 was partly spent in Holderness, N. H., at the hotel then recently built on the summit of Shepherd Hill, the spot so beautifully described in his poem "The Hill-Top." This place was visited by Whittier and his sister some years previous when passing from Plymouth to Centre Harbor, and before it was known as a summer resort. His love of the picturesque and sublime in nature was here fully satisfied. The "Storm on Lake Asquam" was written during his sojourn

at this place, and descriptive of a violent thunderstorm viewed from the veranda of the hotel.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

ASQUAM HOUSE, 7th mo., 14, 1882.

Thy dear letter comes to me here, and I have read it where this beautiful but unhistoric lake stretches away before me, green-gemmed with islands, until it loses itself in the purple haze of the Gunstock mountains, whose summits redden in the setting sun. How can I thank thee for the graphic description of your visit to the Isle of Wight, and strange and picturesque Cloverly, and venerable Hermanstow, with its Norman tower looking, as the rare old vicar did, into the ocean's mystery? Since reading it, I seem to have been with you all the way. Did John Oak or his uncle seem aware that they were carrying a third passenger, like the boatman in Uhland's ballad, and did you pay double fare on my account? It was very kind in thee to take so much time from thy needed rest, and give me this great pleasure. I left Amesbury yesterday in a hot southerly rainstorm, but just as we reached Alton Bay, the wind shifted to the north-northeast, and blew a gale, scattering the clouds, and by the time our steamer passed out of the bay into the lake, the water was white-capped, and waves broke heavily on the small islands, flinging their foam and spray against the green foliage on the shores. It was pleasant to see again the rugged mass of Ossipee loom up before us — and the familiar shapes of the long Sandwich range come slowly into view. To-day

the weather is perfect — clear, keen sunshine and cool, bracing wind. The season is rather late, and the sweet-brier roses are still in bloom, and these often-parched hill slopes are now green as your English downs. But I wish I could have been with you at Alum Bay, as you lay down on the green sward, and heard the bells of Carisbrooke Castle. If you visit London or Rochdale again you may possibly like to meet John Bright, and I inclose a note to him, if you have no better introduction.

TO J. R. TOWNSEND, JAMAICA.

8th mo., 23, 1882.

I have received thy kind letter with the beautiful specimen of the tropical growth of the place where thee and thy wife are laboring to make, with the Lord's help, the world about you better. The incident related in thy letter of the release of the imprisoned slave mother is a very striking one, and recalls Peter's experience at Philippi.[1] I doubt not the Girls' Training Home is greatly needed. It seems to me that the poor colored people of the United States and the West Indies constitute in a peculiar manner the true field of Christian labor in our Society. We could not fight to liberate them, but it was expected of us that we would regard them as providentially our wards.

The following is the reply to a letter signed by fifty of Whittier's friends in Great Britain and

[1] The incident referred to was one which occurred in slavery times in Jamaica. A slave mother, with her babe, was imprisoned within stone walls, which an earthquake threw down, leaving mother and child uninjured.

Ireland, expressing the enjoyment, help, and comfort which his writings had given them: —

AMESBURY, 10th mo., 30, 1882.

Your letter has reached me, and I have read it with a feeling of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, for its words of tender sympathy and encouragement. Especially I am glad, that so many dear friends, whose names recall the worthies of past generations, are able to partake with me of the great hope that He whose will it is that all should turn to Him and live, and whose tender mercy endureth forever and is over all the works of his hands, will do the best that is possible for all his creatures. What that may be, we know not, but we can trust Him to the uttermost. This hope and this trust in the mercy of the All Merciful I have felt impelled to express, yet with a solemn recognition of the awful consequences of alienation from Him, and a full realization of the truth that sin and suffering are inseparable. There is a passage in the prayer of John Woolman on his death-bed which has occurred to me, when the burden of the sin and sorrow of the world has rested heavily upon me: "I felt the misery of my fellow-creatures, separated from the Divine Harmony, and it was greater than I could bear, and I was crushed down under it. In the depth of misery I remembered that Thou art omnipotent, and that I had called Thee Father, and I felt that I loved Thee, and I was made quiet in my will, and waited for deliverance from Thee."

Let me say that the hope which I humbly cher-

ish for myself and my fellow-creatures rests, not upon any work or merit of my own, but upon the Infinite Love, manifested in the life and death of the Divine Master, and in the light and grace afforded to all. In the communion and fellowship of that faith in the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, which is the vital principle of our Religious Society, I am affectionately and gratefully your friend.

It is an illustration of the catholicity of Whittier's religious faith that we find him filling a large place in collections of hymns for worship, extracts from many of his poems appearing in recent hymnals, and becoming favorites among the different Christian denominations. In a collection of sixty-six hymns prepared for the use of the General Congress of Religions at Chicago, in 1893, nine were taken from the poems of Whittier, a larger number than from any other author. The extent to which a religious spirit permeates what would generally be regarded as his secular poems is strikingly shown in the selection made by Samuel Longfellow from his ode to "Democracy," which, under the title of "Christianity," is sung to-day in hundreds of churches. "The Eternal Goodness" has furnished material for two favorite hymns, and "Our Master" has lent itself to no less than three, which appear in different selections. "The Wish of To-Day," "My Psalm," "The Voices," "The Meeting," "The Angel of Patience," "The Shadow and the Light," and others have added to the treasures of modern hymnology, and the yearnings of many a devout soul have found utterance in the words of "Andrew Rykman's Prayer."

When, in December, 1882, an effort was being made to defeat the reëlection of Hon. George F. Hoar to the United States Senate, Mr. Whittier wrote a letter to the Boston "Advertiser," at a time when it proved most serviceable, containing these sentences: —

"I need not tell thee that I should regard it as a serious misfortune for Massachusetts to lose the services of Senator Hoar. I do not know him personally, and I am no man's partisan, but I have watched his course with great satisfaction. I regard him as one of the ablest members of the Senate, where his integrity and loyalty to the best traditions of his State have been abundantly manifested. He is a ready and able speaker, sound in judgment, and when once satisfied of the correctness of his position, he has the courage and firmness of his Puritan blood in maintaining it. It seems to me that it would be little short of political suicide for the legislature to set aside such a man. . . . It is neither safe nor just to discard without excuse or reason a faithful and efficient public servant."

Referring to this letter, Senator Hoar, after the death of Mr. Whittier, wrote to a friend: "It would be a sufficient reward for a lifetime of strenuous service and sacrifice. I received from him once or twice, when the air was full of detraction and calumny, loving messages which were infinitely precious."

It could not be otherwise than that Mr. Whittier should take a lively interest in the philanthropic work of Dorothea L. Dix, and it was his

custom to give expression by letter to his admiration for noble and heroic action on whatever field of peace it might be displayed. His calls upon and letters to Miss Dix when she was enfeebled by disease were full of comfort and strength to her, as may be seen by one of her replies, dated Trenton, N. J., June 29, 1883: —

"The envelope which incloses this letter has long been addressed, but delayed through the variations of a long and distressing illness, as inexorable as it is declared incurable, — ossification of the lining membranes of the arteries. . . . How well I remember with comfort and cheer your calls when I was at Danville. You did not suspect the good you were doing me; your presence bringing to recollection so much you had written inciting to a deeper hope and trust in a Divine Providence, a more profound reverence for the great Creator, and a deeper conviction of the truths of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, the Christ. I do not think, Mr. Whittier, you have ever realized the wide-reaching blessing and good of your published works. My opportunities for knowing very much of this have been large, by personal expression, and more through letters. In saying this to you, I am both earnest and honest. But, dear sir, we must all know in a degree, at least, the influence of our lives. . . . Possessing many comforts, I yet suffer from the influence of unaccustomed inaction, which debility enforces. I have never suffered from the depression that many realize from what is called 'low spirits,' but a sense of aloneness is experienced. Letters from friends

are a source of exceeding satisfaction and comfort. I have no remembrance of any estrangement from an early friend, no break in confidence and trust. Few must attain an advanced age without some 'death in life,' and I have realized very many bereavements, especially of late. . . . I use the pen of a friend for dictation, but add my name by my own hand, now much enfeebled."

Mr. Whittier replied: "Thy letter was very welcome, as I had not heard from thee for several months. I am pained to hear of thy illness. Though still able to go about to some extent, I know, and have known for a long time, the pains and limitations of age and its infirmities, and can enter into sympathy with thee under thy great trial. I wish I could look back on a life work as noble as thine. I never cease to regret that thee did not keep a journal of thy life and labors. The world needs it. I came back [from Asquam Lake to Amesbury] by the way of my native town of Haverhill. I went to the old academy where I was fifty-six years ago. Trees that then stood green and young before it are now, like myself, old and decaying. The faces I knew then are nearly all gone. Only the everlasting beauty of outward Nature remains unchanged, and the merciful Father is over all! The Lord bless thee, dear friend, and comfort thee as a mother comforteth her children!"

The summer of 1883 found him again among the New Hampshire hills, spending some time at Centre Harbor, and in his old haunts by the Asquam lakes, from which retreat he wrote to Mrs. Pitman, who was at the seashore: —

"I wish heartily that I were with you, or you with me, on this breezy hilltop, overlooking the loveliest lakes of New England. Will you not be able to stop at Amesbury on your return? Joseph and Gertrude Cartland are here, and many nice people, among whom is a young lady from New York, who was with Francesca Alexander in Florence, and is mentioned in 'The Story of Ida.' We are reading Sarah Orne Jewett's charming 'Country Doctor' under the pines."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

Asquam House, 7th mo., 1883.

I wish thee and Sarah could have stayed a day longer. The place was, I think, never so beautiful as it seemed in the afternoon and evening after you left. Such a sunset the Lord never before painted. You have gone away with no idea of the beauty of these lakes and hills. I meant you should have all that sky and summer cloud and land and water could give, but Nature did not carry out my good intentions. But *you* were here, and, so far as I was concerned, the outside world's behavior was of small consequence. . . . Our house is now very full — packed, I should call it. Yesterday I was alarmed by the arrival of two more — man and wife — so huge in proportions, that I wonder Barnum has not secured them for his caravan. The one small room left would not hold them, and our landlord gave them their dinner and sent them off. If anybody else comes we shall be in the condition of Wordsworth's "Party in a Parlor:" —

"Crammed just as they on earth were crammed —
All silent and all damned!"

I think this rather startling comparison is in his "Peter Bell." [1]

"The Bay of Seven Islands, and Other Poems," was published in 1883. One of the poems in this volume was "The Rock Tomb of Bradore." A gentleman in Springfield, Mass., wrote to Mr. Whittier, asking: "Is 'The Rock Tomb of Bradore' founded on a real incident — a real epitaph? The poem is one that sinks deep into the heart. The epitaph writes itself in my memory beside one that long since I saw, with my wife, on the wall of Durham cathedral — the names of husband and wife, a date (two hundred years old), and this: —

"'We once were two;
We two made one;
We no more two,
Though life be gone.'

These lines of yours are much in my mind — for I have just heard of the death of a dear friend, whose loss is terrible to us all who knew her — yet who now rejoins the husband from whom she has been outwardly separated for ten years. I can hardly as yet say any word about it — except these words of yours. The poem reads as if there were

[1] It was in the first edition only of *Peter Bell*. Wordsworth struck out the passage in subsequent editions. The whole quotation is as follows: —

"Is it a party in a parlor?
Cramm'd just as they on earth were cramm'd —
Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,
But, as you by their faces see,
All silent and all damn'd!"

a fact behind it; am I too inquisitive in seeking to know the form of the fact?"

Mr. Whittier replied: "There is a *fact* behind the verses of which thee speak. In a work by an English officer, H. Y. Hind, 'Explorations in Labrador,' two volumes, published a quarter of a century ago, the incident is related of his finding the grave of the girl, and I have given the epitaph as the author gave it."

In sending to T. B. Aldrich the copy of the poem "At Last" for the "Atlantic," Whittier wrote: "As the expression of my deepest religious feeling it may not be without interest, and it may help some inquiring spirit. Apart from this, I think I have succeeded in giving it a form not unworthy of the theme."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

1st mo., 26, 1884.

I am deeply interested in the struggle going on in Upper Egypt. I am glad General Gordon is going there. At one time his bravery and sagacity nearly abolished the slave trade, and pacified the wild tribes of the Soudan. His journal while Gordon Pacha of Soudan is one of the most interesting I ever read. What a place for an artist the Soudan would be — if an artist were sure of keeping his head on his shoulders! Those fierce wild hordes, in all variety of costumes and color, with their shields of hippopotamus hide, their long spears, and battle-axes, with El Mahdi at their head in his woven steel armor, the strange desert scenery and relentless sun, would be rare

subjects for his pencil. I suppose thee can form some idea of it from having looked on the Mecca caravan at Cairo.

In 1884, a call was made upon Americans interested in antiquarian research for aid to the Egyptian exploration fund. Dr. Holmes contributed a spade for the unearthing of what he aptly described as "truth, historic truth, the mines of which have never been worked till our own time." Mr. Whittier made a similar contribution, accompanied by the following letter to Rev. W. C. Winslow, the treasurer of the fund: "I am glad to have my attention called to the excavation of Zoar. The enterprise commends itself to every reader of the Bible, and every student of the history and monumental wonders of Egypt. I would like to have a hand in it. I hesitate a little about disturbing the repose of some ancient mummy, who perchance

> "'Hobnobbed with Pharaoh glass to glass,
> Or dropped a half-penny in Homer's hat,
> Or doffed his own to let Queen Dido pass,'

but curiosity gets the best of sentiment, and I follow the example of Dr. Holmes by inclosing an order on Lieutenant-Governor Ames for one of his best shovels."

TO EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

4th mo., 5, 1884.

I think thy "El Mahdi" the most spirited poem I have read for years. The wild wind of the desert blows through it — the fierce sun of the trop-

ics blazes on it — and it is admirably in keeping. As one reads, the wild hordes, splendid in color, barbaric in their half-nakedness, their lean, dark faces ablaze with fanatic fury, are seen sweeping across the burning wastes of the Soudan. The whole strange and terrible romance of the Moslem uprising is condensed in its vigorous and picturesque lines. How, on the other hand, does General Gordon stand out, brave, generous, and self-sacrificing, against the background of vacillating English, and cruel and cowardly Egyptians!

TO THE NATIONAL CARRIAGE BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION.[1]

I am not a builder in the sense of Milton's phrase of one who could "build the lofty rhyme." My vehicles have been of the humbler sort — merely the farm wagon and buckboard of verse, and not likely to run so long as Dr. Holmes's "One Hoss Shay," the construction of which entitles him to the first place in your association. I shall not dare to warrant any of my work for a long drive.

The following inscription was written for a marble bust of Hon. Samuel E. Sewall, of Boston, modeled by Anne Whitney and placed in the Cary Library, Lexington, Mass., May, 1884: —

SAMUEL E. SEWALL.

Like that ancestral judge who bore his name,
Faithful to Freedom and to Truth, he gave,
When all the air was hot with wrath and blame,
His youth and manhood to the fettered slave.

[1] In acknowledgment of election as honorary member.

And never Woman in her suffering saw
A helper tender, wise, and brave as he;
Lifting her burden of unrighteous law,
He shamed the breast of ancient chivalry.

Noiseless as light that melts the darkness is,
He wrought as duty led and honor bid,
No trumpet heralds victories like his, —
The unselfish worker in his work is hid.

This fragment, found among Mr. Whittier's papers, in his handwriting, evidently belongs to some poem he never finished: —

"The dreadful burden of our sins we feel,
The pain of wounds which Thou alone canst heal,
To whom our weakness is our strong appeal.

"From the black depths, the ashes, and the dross
Of our waste lives, we reach out to Thy cross,
And by its fullness measure all our loss!

"That holy sign reveals Thee: throned above
No Moloch sits, no false, vindictive Jove —
Thou art our Father, and Thy name is Love!"[1]

In June, 1884, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Cartland, "I am anxious to know how you are, and whether you will be able to get away about the first of next month. I feel the need of a change, and I fancy thee and Joseph do. It is very warm here now, but it is doubtless cool enough at the Asquam House."

He wrote to Mrs. Fields, from the Asquam House, July 16, 1884: "I came here some ten days ago. I was far from well when I left home,

[1] This is an alternative reading which has been canceled: —

"No lawless Terror dwells in light above,
Cruel as Moloch, deaf and false as Jove —
Thou art our Father, and Thy name is Love!"

the journey was a hard one for me, and I have not had a head equal to anything more than lying under the trees, and listening to cousin Gertrude's reading occasionally. In some respects I am better than when I left home, but I have not borrowed 'the strength of the hills' as yet. Would it be possible for thee and Sarah to come here?"

After spending July with his friends at Holderness, he joined a party to pass a few days at Ossipee Park, whence he wrote to his cousin Gertrude, 8th mo., 9, 1884: "We reached this place about half past twelve o'clock, having been two and a half hours on the road. The boy who drove us did not know the way, got out of it twice, and carried us nearly to Sandwich. I was very tired when we arrived at the Park, and slept none that night. I am glad thee did not attempt the ride. The place is very fine in many respects, but I prefer Asquam. The view of the lake is very beautiful, but it is the only outlook. The house is pleasant, and richly and tastefully furnished. Yesterday the people from Ossipee Camp who visited us at Weirs came here, and I had a pleasant handshaking with them."

On leaving the Asquam House Whittier and his friends spent some time at Sturtevant's Farm, about a mile above Centre Harbor, where they found more quiet than the hotel afforded; under the shade of the large pine-tree overlooking the lakes many delightful hours were enjoyed, which are commemorated in his poem "The Wood Giant," written on the spot. Here he was joined

by his valued friend Rev. Julius W. Atwood, who henceforward usually spent the whole or a part of his summer vacation with the Whittier party. The following extracts from a letter of Mr. Atwood's give pleasant glimpses of Mr. Whittier's daily life during his summerings, and show the sprightly and thoughtful tone of his delightful talks. Mr. Atwood says: "Although Mr. Whittier had no fondness for society in a technical sense, no one more keenly enjoyed his friends; and his rich fund of anecdote, his remarkable memory of events, of literature, and of persons, and his sparkling humor and delicate tact made him a most charming companion. After breakfast it was our practice to assemble in the parlor for reading the Bible and other devotional books, which often led to interesting discussion; then we would scatter to our respective occupations, Mr. Whittier generally going to his room to answer some of his innumerable letters. Later on we would meet again in social groups, or wend our way through the lovely woodland path to the majestic pine, beneath whose shadow, and with the wide prospect of lake and mountain stretching before us, we spent many happy hours with books and papers and talk, or, as Mr. Whittier expressed it, 'in listless quietude of mind,' often lingering to witness the glorious sunset reflections upon lake and cloud, and the afterglow upon the mountains. In one of our talks I asked him how it seemed to be famous. To which he replied: 'I object to the word as applied to myself — which has always been distasteful to me. I prefer to call it notoriety. The

great satisfaction that has come to me through my writings has been that it has brought me the friendship of some people, whom otherwise I should not have known, whom I love, and who love me. There are a great many good and interesting people in the world, and I have been favored to meet many of them.' Speaking one day of modern writers, he said, 'I regard Emerson as foremost in the rank of American poets; he has written better things than any of us.' It was always a delight to hear his comments upon the public men he had known, from John Quincy Adams down to our own time. While retaining a lively interest in all literary and political matters and keeping abreast of current events, he dwelt most intently in his later years upon the great spiritual and eternal realities of God. By the open fire in the evening he would talk for hours upon sacred themes, ever grateful for the rich blessings of his life and looking with reverent curiosity towards the future, often saying he should not only be willing but glad to go in God's own time, but that he was also glad to live. There was not a shadow of doubt in his mind concerning the immortality of the soul, and one day when speaking of his own hope and expectation for the life to come, he sadly said, 'I wish Emerson could have believed this.' It saddened him to feel that one whom he so deeply loved and revered had not been sustained by this most passionate longing of our human nature. 'He never seemed to care to discuss the subject,' said Mr. Whittier; 'but near the close of his life, when our conversation had turned upon it, and I saw him

for the last time, he said, "Come to Concord and see me, and we will let our buckets deep down into the well and see what we can draw up."'

"From year to year we noticed his increasing feebleness: his walks were a little shorter and less frequent, his seasons of rest longer, and as his summer resorts became known he felt the necessity of a change to avoid a tiresome influx of visitors. For this reason he abandoned his haunts by the Asquam lakes, and one year would find him at Conway, another at Green Acre, another at Wakefield; but wherever it was our privilege to accompany him, the remembrance of those days must remain as a benediction."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK "CRITIC."[1]

8th mo., 1884.

Poet, essayist, novelist, humorist, scientist, ripe scholar, and wise philosopher, if Dr. Holmes does not at the present time hold in popular estimation the first place in American literature, his rare versatility is the cause. In view of the inimitable prose-writer, we forget the poet; in our admiration of his melodious verse, we lose sight of "Elsie Venner" and "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table." We laugh over his wit and humor, until, to use his own words, —

"We suspect the azure blossom that unfolds upon a shoot,
As if Wisdom's old potato could not flourish at its root;"

and perhaps the next page melts us into tears by a pathos only equaled by that of Sterne's sick Lieutenant. He is Montaigne and Bacon under one

[1] On the occasion of the birthday of Dr. Holmes.

hat. His varied qualities would suffice for the mental furnishing of half a dozen literary specialists. To those who have enjoyed the privilege of his intimate acquaintance, the man himself is more than the author. His genial nature, entire freedom from jealousy or envy, quick tenderness, large charity, hatred of sham, pretense, and unreality, and his reverent sense of the eternal and permanent, have secured for him something more and dearer than literary renown — the love of all who know him. I might say much more; I could not say less. May his life be long in the land!

Whittier once said in conversation: "Suppose such a poem as any of Dr. Holmes's recent ones should be found with the name of any of the old masters of song attached to it, would it not add to the reputation of the ancient worthy? What if one of the least of Holmes's poems should be attributed to Ben Jonson; would it not increase Jonson's fame? I do not like the fanciful conceits of the old school. Moore is now forgotten but for his songs; Byron is going out of fashion; Burns lives, — perhaps partly because of the clannishness of the Scotch."

These lines were written in the album of a grandson of his life-long friend, Theodore D. Weld, in April, 1884: —

> What shall I wish him? Strength and health
> May be abused, and so may wealth.
> Even fame itself may come to be
> But wearying notoriety.
> What better can I ask than this? —
> A life of brave unselfishness,

Wisdom for council, eloquence
For Freedom's need, for Truth's defense,
The championship of all that 's good,
The manliest faith in womanhood,
The steadfast friendship changing not
With change of time or place or lot,
Hatred of sin, but not the less
A heart of pitying tenderness
And charity, that, suffering long,
Shames the wrong-doer from his wrong:
One wish expresses all — that he
May even as his grandsire be!

TO LUCY LARCOM.

DANVERS, 12th mo., 12, 1884.

I shall hope to be in Amesbury the last of this month, for it is lonely here this season. I shall of course miss the furnace-warmed house here, but I shall see some of my old neighbors and friends and look at familiar faces. . . . Somehow those who knew and loved my sister seem nearest to me.

CHAPTER XIV.

LAST YEARS.

1884–1892.

The burden of his correspondence became a serious matter to Mr. Whittier in his later years, for it increased as old age robbed him of the strength to bear it. He had no taste for dictating letters; it was easier for him to write them with his own hand, and he seldom called for help in answering the letters he received. A letter from any old friend was laid aside for the earliest possible answer from his own hand. Until it became a physical impossibility to attend to them, all requests for autographs were answered. In many cases he copied stanzas and whole poems to accommodate a stranger; and many an album contains original verses of his, that have never been made public. He was accustomed to write in the morning, rising early, and finishing most of his correspondence before breakfast. He seldom used the gold pens and handsome inkstands that were sent him, but put them aside as ornaments, contenting himself with steel pens, which he dipped in the little bottles of ink he bought of his stationer. He had no patience with the new-fangled fountain pens and stylographs. The typewriter was not perfected in season for him. He wrote rapidly

a clear, legible hand. He had no system of shorthand, but his first drafts of poems and letters are exceedingly difficult to decipher, the words being run together without crossing of the *t* or dotting of the *i*, and with a bewildering network of interlineation and erasure.

The hardest part of his work was correspondence with poor souls who, having tried every other resource in a vain effort to make a living, at last turned their attention to literature. They came for advice to one who had been successful. His never-failing kindness of heart and his quick sympathies did not allow him to dismiss such cases without helpful consideration, and he had the merciful skill to bind up every wound it was necessary to inflict. Whenever there was urgent need of pecuniary assistance, even from strangers at a distance, as soon as he was satisfied of the need help was given, and his benefactions of this nature were numerous.

There are many amusing incidents in connection with calls made upon him for autographs, and for criticism of manuscripts sent him by those who had no claim upon his attention. His fear of slighting any one who had a genuine interest in him or his work led him to err on what he considered the safe side in this matter. His first impulse was always a kind one, — to grant whatever favor was asked of him. A great number of young writers submitted their first verses for his criticism — or rather approval. If he saw any sign of talent he had some pleasant word for his correspondent, even if he could not give much encourage-

ment. His advice was invariable, not to depend upon verse-making for a livelihood. He frequently received abusive letters because the demands made upon him were not answered in the way desired. A man in Arkansas sent back the autograph for which he had called, because a poem had not accompanied it. He named several poets who had thus accommodated him, and his collection was too valuable to be cheapened by having a simple name in it! He wished nothing at all if he could not have what he called for.

Mr. Whittier was once called up at midnight by a large party of students from the Phillips Exeter Academy, who explained that they were belated by accident. They had started, each with an autograph book, with the expectation of meeting him at a more seasonable hour. He arose and dressed himself and received a party of young men who filled his house, and set about writing in all their books. As they were leaving, very profuse in their thanks, one of them looked at his book, and exclaimed: "You have written only *John* in my book!" "I am afraid some of you have not got as much as that," he replied, as he took up his candle and bade them good-night.

The calls upon him for letters that might be used to help the sale of books and pictures were numerous, and whenever he could conscientiously do so, he was ready to offer such assistance. When Prang published the fine picture illustrating Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," he wrote words of high praise for the artist's work. Rival publishers issued inferior copies of the painting, and had the

impudence to quote Whittier's words as applying to their work, whereupon he wrote this letter to Mr. Prang: "I have heard of writers who could pass judgment upon works of art without seeing them; but the part assigned me by this use of my letter to thee, making me the critic of a thing not in existence, adds to their ingenuity the gift of prophecy. It seems to be hazardous to praise anything. There is no knowing to what strange uses one's words may be put. When a good deal younger than I am now, I addressed some laudatory lines to Henry Clay; but the newspapers soon transferred them to Thomas H. Benton, and it was even said that the saints of Nauvoo made them do duty in the apotheosis of the prophet Joseph Smith. My opinions as an art-critic are not worth much to the public; and, as they seem to be as uncertain and erratic in their directions as an Australian boomerang, I shall, I think, be chary in future of giving them. I don't think I should dare speak favorably of the *Venus de Medici*, as I might expect to find my words affixed to some bar-room lithograph of the bearded woman."

He was generous in his contributions to all philanthropic and reformatory work, without regard to race or nationality. This was a service which his religion demanded, — its dominant note was "help for the helpless." Worthy young men and women, struggling for an education, or about to enter upon business, found in him a wise and ever-ready counselor and assistant, and his sympathetic insight sometimes revealed the needs of others, and enabled him to render timely aid to

those who, perhaps, never knew whence their relief came.

In 1884, Charles F. Coffin, of Lynn, a member of the Society of Friends, who enjoyed the intimate friendship of the poet, presented to the Friends' School at Providence, R. I., a portrait of Whittier painted by Edgar Parker. It is life-size, and represents him as seated in an arm-chair in an attitude of peaceful thought. On the occasion of the presentation, an address was delivered by Thomas Chase, President of Haverford College. A letter from James Russell Lowell, then minister to England, was read, which was accompanied by this sonnet: —

"New England's poet, rich in love as years,
Her hills and valleys praise thee, her swift brooks
Dance in thy verse; to her grave sylvan nooks
Thy steps allure us, which the wood-thrush hears
As maids their lovers', and no treason fears.
Through thee her Merrimacs and Agiochooks
And many a name uncouth win gracious looks,
Sweetly familiar to both Englands' ears.
Peaceful by birthright as a virgin lake,
The lily's anchorage, which no eyes behold
Save those of stars, yet for thy brother's sake,
That lay in bonds, thou blew'st a blast as bold
As that wherewith the heart of Roland brake,
Far heard across the New World and the Old."

A letter from John Bright was also read, expressing his regret at not being able to be present. He said in closing: —

"In the poem of 'Snow-Bound' there are lines on the death of the poet's sister which have nothing superior to them in beauty and pathos in our language. I have read them often with always

increasing admiration. I have suffered from the loss of those near and dear to me, and I can apply the lines to my own case and feel as if they were written for me. 'The Eternal Goodness' is another poem which is worth a crowd of sermons which are spoken from the pulpits of our sects and churches, which I do not wish to undervalue. It is a great gift to mankind when a poet is raised up among us who devotes his great powers to the sublime purpose of spreading among men principles of mercy and justice and freedom. This our friend Whittier has done in a degree unsurpassed by any other poet who has spoken to the world in our noble tongue. I feel it a great honor that my bust should stand in your hall near the portrait of your great poet."

The career of General Gordon, who lost his life at Khartoum, had a great fascination for Mr. Whittier, and he often expressed his admiration of his character, as a Christian and philanthropist, of course, and not as a soldier. In March, 1885, Mr. Whittier received a letter from his friend, John Bright, who had left Gladstone's cabinet on account of the Egyptian policy of the government, severely criticising him, as a member of the Society of Friends, for some expression of his in favor of Gordon, which had been made public in England. Mr. Whittier had been called upon by Mr. Charles C. Reed, of London, to write an ode to the memory of Gordon. To this request Mr. Whittier had replied, under date of March 4, 1885: —

"Thy letter found me pondering the very subject

to which it so kindly sought to call my attention. For years I have followed General Gordon's course with constantly increasing interest, wonder, and admiration, and I have felt his death as a great personal bereavement. A Providential man, his mission in an unbelieving and selfish age revealed the mighty power of faith in God, self-abnegation, and the enthusiasm of humanity. For centuries no grander figure has crossed the disk of our planet. Unique, unapproachable in his marvelous individuality, he belongs to no sect or party, and defies classification or comparison. I should be sorry to see his name used for party purposes, for neither Conservative nor Radical has any special claim upon him. . . . We Americans, in common with all English-speaking people, the world over, lament his death, and share his glorious memory.

"I wish it were in my power to do what thee so kindly suggest, but I scarcely feel able to do justice, at this time, to the wonderful personality which for the past year has stood on the banks of the Nile, relieved against the dark background of the Soudan. I have been suffering from illness, and dare not undertake the eulogy of such a man with a feeble hand. Perhaps it may some time be in my power, as it is now in my inclination, to put my thoughts of him into material form. If I could reach the ear of Alfred Tennyson,[1] I should urge

[1] Mr. Reed writes: "I communicated this to Lord Tennyson, and in addition to cordially thanking me for the extract from Mr. Whittier's letter, as above, Lord Tennyson wrote Mr. Whittier as follows: "—

him to give the world a threnody inspired by the life and death of one who has made not only England but the world richer for his memory."

An extract from this characteristic letter was sent by Mr. Reed to an English paper, Mr. Whittier offering no objection, although it was not originally written for publication. The long letter of protest from John Bright, referred to above, was called out by the publication of this extract. Bright's letter, covering eight pages of note-paper, is not here published, permission not having been received. But Whittier's reply may properly have place in these pages. It was dated 3d mo., 31, 1885 : —

My dear Friend, — I regret the publication of my hasty private note to C. C. Reed, as it has occasioned thee uneasiness. I quite agree with thee as regards the armed interference with Egypt and the Soudan, and I think one of the best acts of thy life was thy withdrawal from the ministry in consequence of it. But as respects Charles Gordon, I cannot withdraw my admiration from the man, while I disapprove of his warlike methods.

Dear Mr. Whittier, — Your request has been forwarded to me, and I herein send you an epitaph for Gordon in our Westminster Abbey — that is, for his cenotaph : —

> "Warrior of God, man's friend, not here below,
> But somewhere dead far in the waste Soudan ;
> Thou livest in all hearts, for all men know
> This earth hath borne no simpler, nobler man."

With best wishes, yours very faithfully, Tennyson.

Mr. Reed adds: "Mr. Whittier told me afterwards that he wanted not four lines only, but something like Tennyson's *Ode on the Duke of Wellington*."

I learned much of him from my friend, Dr. Williams, who knew him well in China, and who thought him one of the most generous and self-sacrificing men he ever knew. Still later, I have read of his labors in the Soudan to suppress the dreadful slave trade, and it seems to me that he went to Khartoum once more really on an errand of peace, and I am not sure that he would not have succeeded if the English army had not invaded the Soudan. It is not probable that I shall write a poem on his life and death, but I thought of it, and intended to express my admiration of his faith, courage, and self-abnegation, while lamenting his war training and his reliance on warlike means to accomplish a righteous end. As it is, he was a better man than David or Joshua — he was humane and never put his prisoners into brick-kilns nor under hammers. And he believed in a *living* God, who reveals himself now as in the old time. There seems to be no excuse now for keeping General Wolseley in the Soudan. I see no reason for fighting the Arabs, who surely are not to blame for disliking the rule of Egypt. I hope the danger of a war between England and Russia has passed away. The matter at issue is one to be settled by arbitration, not by the sword. I wish we could say that my country is Christian. Our new Secretary of State has spoken out manfully and strongly against the dynamite mischief. The past winter has been a hard one for me, and I am far from well. Hoping that thy own health is good, I am with love and sincere regard thy friend.

TO JOSEPH CARTLAND.

3d mo., 24, 1885.

I see there is a great deal of criticism of "A Reasonable Faith."[1] Those who deny the divine revelation of the Holy Spirit, and who regard the letter of the Bible as the sole authority in Christian faith, I suppose would be alarmed by it. And those who have looked without a word of dissent upon the work of destruction which has been going on in our Society for the last decade will, of course, continue it, as well as those in England who have been giving aid and comfort to the disorganizers here. However sound and evangelical a man may be, if he does not use their language and pronounce their "Shibboleth" he must be put down. All this, however, can really harm no one personally, though it is a sad evidence of the demoralization of our Society.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

6th mo., 16, 1885.

From all that I have heard of mediumship it seems to affect unfavorably the moral sense — the distinction between true and false is less clear. Mediums are first deceived themselves, and they are tempted to deceive others. Their actions have the irresponsibility of dreams; they live and move in an unnatural atmosphere, where it is neither full daylight, nor yet utter darkness; an uncertain twilight in which things may *seem*, which are not. The more I think of it, the more I am convinced

[1] *A Reasonable Faith: Short Essays for the Times.* By three English Friends.

that, for the present, the whole matter may be best left to the cool heads of the Psychical Research. The future life is sure — our dear ones live ; but we may separate ourselves further from them, by consulting uncertain oracles, deceiving and being deceived. Let us believe, and trust, and *wait*. "Patience," Milton says, "is the exercise of saints," and it may not be unprofitable for us sinners.

TO HON. JOHN SCHULTZ, OF MANITOBA.[1]

4th mo., 25, 1885.

The Indian question is pressing for solution upon the United States as well as the Dominion of Canada. It is one of great difficulty, and requires not only political wisdom but Christian philanthropy for its adjustment, both of which seem to me indicated in thy speech in the Canadian Senate. I heartily thank thee for it.

Mr. Whittier's voice in reading poetry, whether his own or others', was fuller and stronger than in ordinary conversation or in reading prose. There was a depth and sonorousness in it that would surprise any one who, accustomed only to his conversation, heard him read verse for the first time. If he could have read in public with the same voice he used in a small company of friends, an audience of thousands would have been delighted with his rendering of a poem. Of the poet's manner of reading his own verses, a writer in the "Portland Transcript" says : —

[1] On reading his speech in the Canadian Parliament, in behalf of the Indians.

"One evening at the Sturtevants', we were talking of the immense pine we had seen in the pasture, and Mr. Whittier said he had just written 'a little ditty' about it. His cousin Gertrude asked if he would not let us hear it, and without hesitation he read his noble poem 'The Wood Giant.' His voice in reading was of a quality entirely different from that in conversation — much fuller and deeper. The lines were scanned with a majestic movement, and the slight hoarseness which has for several years affected his voice added to the effect of the reading; an audience of a thousand people could have heard every syllable. This stanza was read with especial impressiveness: —

> "'Was it the half-unconscious moan
> Of one apart and mateless,
> The weariness of unshared power,
> The loneliness of greatness?'

"Taking from the table a volume of Trowbridge's poems he turned to 'At Sea,' remarking that it was the best work of this writer, 'and nothing better of its kind was ever written by anybody.' He then read the poem aloud, with the same full, deep voice with which he had rendered his own lines."

After his return from his summer in New Hampshire in 1885, he wrote from Amesbury to a friend: "I have returned to this place after some weeks' sojourn among the hills, and I think on the whole I am better for the change, but it would take the Himalayas and the Andes to make me feel young again. We had pleasant weather and pleasant

friends, and we are thankful for the days spent under the pines at Asquam."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

10th mo., 2, 1885.

I have been thinking of thy gracious and generous proposal of hospitality. It has made me very happy, though I have not been able to see how I can avail myself of it. I find that I am unable to bear the excitement of city life for any length of time, however carefully I may be shielded by my friends. I am unhappily notorious, and cannot hide myself. My deafness makes me confused and uncomfortable when strangers are present. The great and really painful effort I am compelled to make when in company, to listen and try to understand, and make fitting replies, and the uncertainty I feel, when I venture to speak, whether I have heard aright — all this affects my nerves, and costs me nights of sleeplessness and days of weariness. In fact I am what the Turks call "a cut-off one," so far as society is concerned. . . . As soon as it is known that I am in your premises a steady stream of interviewers, autograph-hunters, and people with missions will flow in upon you. It would be like having a waif from Barnum's Museum shut up in your library, and people coming in to see what it looks like. It would make your life miserable. Sarah's dog could not keep them off. You would have to get out a writ of ejectment and set me and my carpet-bag into the street — and yet how I wish I could say "yes"! I thank the good Providence that has given me such a friend,

dear as Vittoria Colonna to Michael Angelo. I wish I could look forward to the enjoyment of such friendship for many years in this life, but when one is approaching fourscore that is not to be expected. Though for that matter, I see that Senator Hoar, in his great speech of day before yesterday at Springfield, took occasion to deny the self-evident fact that I am an old man! . . . I had a rare good visit from Dr. Holmes and his wife the other day. We two old boys wandered about in the woods, talking of many things — half merry, half sad. We were stranded mariners, the survivors of a lost crew, warming ourselves at a fire kindled from the wreck of our vessel. . . . The woods here are blazing with color, but I fail to see the red against the green. Both look the same. But the walnuts and maples are glorious, making sunshine when there is none in the heavens.

PHILLIPS BROOKS TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

11th mo., 11, 1885.

I have long known John Woolman and delighted in his Journals. And I have been well aware how the first honor of the anti-slavery work belongs to the Society of Friends. If only other religious bodies had been as ready for their duty, how different it might have been! Archdeacon Farrar left me on Monday. He will never forget — as I surely shall not — the kind and cordial welcome which you gave us, and the time which it was our privilege to pass with you. I have had much to thank you for before, very much indeed. Now it is a pleasure to assure you most earnestly of my respect and deepened gratitude.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.[1]

2d mo., 9, 1886.

There was nothing of the gloom and horror of a Puritanic funeral. All was quiet and peaceful, and more than hopeful. The full assurance of the all-enfolding love of the Heavenly Father seemed with the friends and relatives. It was a cheerful acceptance, rather than resignation to the inevitable. Was it a delusion, a forced make-believe, or the faith which robs the grave of its victory?

This poem, entitled "A Day's Journey," was written in 1886, for the tenth anniversary of the wedding of his niece: —

After your pleasant morning travel
You pause as at a wayside inn,
And take with grateful hearts your breakfast
Though served in dishes all of TIN.

Then go, while years as hours are counted,
Until the dial's hand at noon
Invites you to a dinner table
Garnished with SILVER fork and spoon.

And when the vesper bell to supper
Is calling, and the day is old,
May love transmute the tin of morning
And noonday's silver into GOLD.

His summer visit in 1886 was to Centre Harbor and the Sturtevant Farm, whither the Cartlands and Lucy Larcom accompanied him. His letters to his friends from these places give evidence of hearty enjoyment of walks and readings under the oaks and pines. In autumn, after his return

[1] After attending the funeral of a lovely young girl, where the services were conducted in the Swedenborgian form.

to Amesbury, he wrote that he wished he could go back to the mountains and "see the woods tangled with rainbows."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

8th mo., 29, 1886.

I was glad to hear from thee, and that thee find the quiet of Ossipee Park, the crowd and fashion of the Crawford House, alike interesting. It is possible to be too quiet, and a change from solitary Nature to human contact and voices is sometimes desirable. There are always nice people to be found in any crowd. For my own part, I like folks generally. Very few come amiss to me.

TO JOHN BRIGHT.

9th mo., 3, 1886.

I appreciate the serious question which agitates Great Britain at this time, and I do not feel that I fully understand it. I doubt the propriety of our meddling with it on this side of the water. It has indeed occurred to me that a federative system in which Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Austria, and India could all be represented in the common Parliament of England, might be a solution of the question, but there may be difficulties which I do not comprehend in the way of such an arrangement. . . . I hope the years rest more lightly on thee than on myself. I am older (in my 79th year) and find my strength failing, though I am grateful to a good Providence for many blessings which alleviate the pains and infirmities of age. I am, very truly, thy loving and grateful friend.

TO GRACE GREENWOOD.

10th mo., 1886.

I spent last summer among the New Hampshire hills, as I have done for several years. Nature never disappoints me. I think every year of my life makes me more sensitive to the beauty all about us. At times, a great feeling of loneliness comes over me; I miss sadly the old dear faces, and think of the days that are no more. My life has not proved what I dreamed of in youth, but I suppose that is true of all. My world is really composed of a few dear friends. I wish I could see thee and talk over our old recollections, and I shall hope to do so if we both live to another summer. I hope our meeting will be in Amesbury, for somehow I always associate thee with that place.

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

10th mo., 1886.

I expect to go to Amesbury the first of next week to meet my niece Elizabeth Pickard, and to vote at election. I shall not vote for ——. He and the rest of the so-called Independents have gone over entirely to the Democratic party. I am a Republican still. If my party makes a bad nomination, I shall not vote it, but shall not stultify myself by going over to a party which has done its worst to destroy the Union and sustain slavery.

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

12th mo., 18, 1886.

What words can adequately thank thee for thy rare poem — too beautiful for its subject — which

greeted me on my birthday! I felt while reading it as if I were enjoying myself under false pretenses, and appropriating something that belonged to somebody else. I began to doubt my identity, like the man coming from town-meeting after he had been chosen selectman, and who, overwhelmed with his honors, began to feel that he could not be himself, and was only reassured by calling his dog, and finding himself recognized. Seriously, the poem is a very fine one, and I am just as grateful as if I deserved it.

"Saint Gregory's Guest, and Recent Poems," published in 1886, contained sixteen poems beside the verses which gave the title to the book, most of them written after Mr. Whittier had passed his seventy-fifth year. They include "The Homestead," "The Wood Giant," "Revelation," "Banished from Massachusetts," "The Two Elizabeths," "Sweet Fern," "How the Robin Came," "Birchbrook Mill," and "Hymns of the Brahmo Somaj."

The origin of the poem "The Light that is Felt" is explained in the following letter from Mrs. George A. Palmer, of Elmira, N. Y.: "When my oldest daughter was two and a half years old, she knew Whittier's 'Barefoot Boy' by heart, thus: When I would repeat it to her the omission of a line would be instantly corrected; as one day she said to me, 'Mamma, you skipted out "apples of Cusperides."' Once, in going ahead of me in a dark hall, she turned with sudden fear, and said, 'Mamma, take hold of my hand, so it

will not be so dark.' This incident and the fact of her affection for Mr. Whittier's poetry was reported to him by a friend of the family. My surprise and delight were great when, in April, 1884, I received a kind letter from the poet and a manuscript copy of the poem, which was afterward published in the Christmas number of 'St. Nicholas.' In his letter Mr. Whittier said, 'I am glad I have such a friend in thy little girl. Her good opinion of my verses is worth more to me than that of a learned reviewer. I send a rhymed paraphrase of her own beautiful thought.'"

Soon after "The Homestead" appeared, Mr. Whittier wrote to Mrs. Pitman: "I am glad thee liked 'The Homestead.' I saw in the country several of these melancholy spectacles of abandoned homes. I think the farmers of New England are better off as a class, on their hard soil, than those who are on the rich lands of the West. They are not rich, but they are not poor; they live comfortably, and as a rule own their farms clear of mortgage. If they were content to live and toil as the poorer farmers in the West do, they would double their deposits in the savings banks." About this poem Sarah Orne Jewett wrote: "I do not know when anything has touched me so nearly and dearly. Nobody has mourned more than I over the forsaken farmhouses which I see everywhere as I drive about the country out of which I grew, and where every bush and tree seem like my cousins! I hope this will make people stop and think, and I know it will bring tears to many eyes. That line about

the squirrel in the forsaken house nobody else would have thought of but you. I send all the thanks one little letter can carry."

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

2d mo., 12, 1887.

I hasten to thank thee for thy beautiful gift, which brings the fragrance of the pine woods to me. I shall have a softer pillow than Jacob of old had, and if I do not see "angels ascending and descending," I shall dream of the kind friend who sent it, which is quite as well. As old Father Taylor said, when asked if he did n't want to go where the angels were: "I don't want angels; I like folks better!". . . There is nothing better than work for mind and body. It makes the burden of sorrow, which all must sooner or later carry, lighter. I like the wise Chinese proverb: "You cannot prevent the birds of sadness from flying over your head, but you may prevent them from stopping to build their nests in your hair!"

TO ELIZABETH GAY.

2d mo., 22, 1887.

Some of my friends in Boston are puzzling themselves with the Buddhist Theosophy, and have got a Hindoo adept, one Mohini, a solemn-faced Oriental, to expound its mysteries. And the Society for Psychical Research are gathering up all the stories afloat of signs and omens and apparitions, witchcraft, and spiritualism — a competitive examination of ghosts! I have rather enjoyed reading the reports of a similar society in Eng-

land. The investigations are conducted on strictly scientific principles. I hope some clue may be found to the great mystery of life and death — and the beyond! But I scarcely expect it. We shall still have to trust and wonder, and keep our faith, with Emerson, that "whatever is excellent, as God lives is permanent."

In March, 1887, Rev. John W. Chadwick, D. D., of Brooklyn, wrote the following letter to Mr. Whittier, embodying a suggestion that was to some extent heeded in the edition of his complete works published in 1888: "In connection with certain studies, I have done much reading lately in your poems, already long well known, and I now write to beg of you that ere it is too late you will prepare an edition of them with little paragraphs attached — headings rather than notes — indicating the circumstances which called them forth. I am sure that such an edition would be very welcome, and that it would be immensely useful in the way of instruction concerning many a feature of the anti-slavery struggle. Your poems will be read much more than any history. You would have an ample precedent in the edition of Wordsworth containing such paragraphs, and you must know how highly these paragraphs are esteemed. Many of your personal poems, like that on our old friends, the Coxes of Kennett Square, would get new interest from a few words of explanation. Will you not think very seriously of this? I am sure you could do nothing that would so much increase the debt of gratitude we owe to you already."

This is Mr. Whittier's reply: "I thank thee for the kind suggestions of thy letter, and should be glad to do something in accordance with them, if I did not fear it would seem to be attaching too much importance on my part to my writings, when in sober fact I see and feel their deficiencies so clearly that sometimes I turn from them with utter weariness. And secondly, I feel the weight of years growing very heavy, and any task beyond that of the necessary routine of daily imperative duty, I shrink from. 'The grasshopper is a burden.' I will, however, bear thy suggestion in mind, and if my health and strength permit, I may yet see my way clear to act to some extent upon it."

In 1887, he wrote to an aged friend in New Bedford, Daniel Ricketson, that Boston had lost much of its old attraction for him, since Emerson, Longfellow, Fields, and other friends had passed away, and added, "I try to get into the fields and woods as often as I feel able. Nature never disappoints me — never tires me. I think in love of Nature, and simple quiet living, thee and I are much alike. We both find solace in rhythmic lines, and we both loved Emerson and Thoreau. I am nearer the great mystery than thyself, but we are both almost at its gate. May the dear God be with us!" On another occasion, he wrote to the same friend, in regard to some great strikes then in progress: "My sympathies are naturally with the laboring class, amidst which I was born and grew up to manhood. But I confess that I have never known much benefit to result to that

class from 'strikes.' I do not know enough of this particular movement to feel authorized in expressing a decided opinion."

In 1887, a township in southern California, near Los Angeles, was named for Mr. Whittier, and its Quaker founders sent him a deed of a lot of land on its central square. In his letter acknowledging the compliment he wrote: "The great tide of emigration to southern California will not fail to fill up the vacant lots and outlying farms of the Quaker city. I use that term in no sectarian sense, for I see the good in all denominations, and hope that all will be represented in the settlement. I trust that its Quakerism will be of the old, practical kind, 'diligent in business and serving the Lord,' not wasting its strength and vitality in spasmodic emotions, not relying on creed and dogma, but upon faithful obedience to the voice of God in the heart. I shall watch the progress of the settlement with deep interest, and earnest desires for its growth and welfare. I cannot doubt that care will be taken that the dreadful evil of intemperance shall not be permitted to fasten itself upon the young settlement, and that in sobriety, industry, large charity, active benevolence, and educational privilege it may prove an example worthy of general imitation, and fulfill the fond anticipations of its founders."

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

OAK KNOLL, 6th mo., 1887.

I wish thee could see this place now, in the full glory of late June. The lawns and woods and

flowers are at their best. Rhodoras, azaleas, sweet-brier, and other wild flowers are making the woods lovely. I hope to go to Amesbury this week. It is not as pretty there, but it is more like home, and I seem nearer to the dear ones who lived there with me. Does thee take much interest in the Andover trial? My sympathies are strongly with the professors, though I don't see how they can stick to the creed which girdles the university with its iron chain. The great question of the Future Life is almost ever with me. I cannot answer it, but I can *trust*.

TO EDWARD WORSDELL.

11th mo., 30, 1887.

I am glad to learn that a second edition of the "Gospel of Divine Help"[1] is called for. It supplies a want which, it seems to me, was never so strongly felt as at the present time, not only in the Society of Friends, but among the thoughtful and earnest seekers after truth in other denominations, who find it impossible to accept much which seems to them irreverent and dishonoring to God in creeds founded on an arbitrary arrangement of isolated and often irrelevant texts — the letter that killeth, without the Spirit, which alone gives life. It is scarcely possible to overestimate the evils of doubt, anguish, despair, and infidelity resulting from doctrines which attribute to the Heavenly Father schemes and designs utterly at variance with the moral sense of his creatures, and

[1] *The Gospel of Divine Help.* By Edward Worsdell, B. A., of Lancaster, England.

which in them would be regarded as unspeakably unjust and cruel. To those who have become confused and bewildered by having these dreadful conceptions of the All-Merciful forced upon them as a vital necessity of Christian belief, this little book may afford a clearer view of the simple truths of divine revelation. I cannot but believe that even those who may dissent from, or not fully adopt, some of its conclusions must feel, as they read, the prayerful reverence and earnest sincerity of its author in his desire to vindicate the ways of God to man, and win souls to the Divine Master, by presenting the "sweet reasonableness" of his gospel of love. The entire freedom of the book from self-assertion, assumption, and dogmatism affords small opportunity for unfriendly criticism. It is the honest work of an honest man, desirous of helping others, who may be in doubt and discouragement, to find the light and peace into which he has been providentially led. It has my respect and sympathy.

TO JOHN BRIGHT.

9th mo., 16, 1887.

I see your Yearly Meeting has appointed delegates to the conference of Yearly Meetings of Friends. I am not expecting much good from the conference. It is utterly impossible to reconcile the radical differences of opinion and action in our Society, on both sides of the water. Some of us are still Friends of the Fox and Penn and Barclay school, and we cannot shout and sing like the Salvation Army. Some of us still believe in the Divine Immanence.

TO NORA PERRY.

12th mo., 16, 1887.

Whipple was one of the first to speak a good word for me in the "North American Review." I used to meet him whenever I came to Boston, and he and Fields, and Haskell, editor of the Boston "Transcript," and I used to get together at the "Old Corner Book-Store," or at a neighboring restaurant, where we got coffee and chatted pleasantly of men and books. There were others doubtless with us — I think probably Underwood and Starr King, and later, J. R. Osgood. I used to think Whipple said his best things on such occasions.

Mr. Whittier's affection for Whipple led him to write an introductory note to a collection of his friend's papers issued at this time.

The eightieth anniversary of Whittier's birth was celebrated with marks of especial honor. Hon. George F. Hoar's address delivered at a banquet of the Essex club, in Boston, November 12, 1887, was a worthy prelude to the great chorus of praise and congratulation in which the voice of every State was heard a few weeks later. It was a call for some suitable testimonial from his native county. Senator Hoar said that Essex County had contributed three of the greatest names in the history of liberty, in three memorable epochs, namely, Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich, author of the "Body of Liberties;" Nathan Dane of Beverly, author of the ordinance that devoted the great Northwest to liberty, and John G. Whittier of Amesbury. Of Mr. Whittier he said: —

"The third, which I should place highest in the list, is the name of our living fellow-citizen, John G. Whittier. I wonder if Mr. Whittier knows how much his countrymen love him. The service he has rendered in our great anti-slavery struggle is one with which I think that of no orator can be compared. The speech of Webster or Sumner is heard but by few. How soon, after all, it is forgotten! But the musical arrow of the poet pierces the heart of the whole people. It stirs the blood. It dwells in the memory. It springs to the lips in the time of deepest emotion. The figure of the orator is forgotten when his own passes away. But Whittier sits, and for centuries will sit, by millions of American firesides, a beloved and perpetual guest. It is said that —

> 'Scotland shall flourish while each peasant learns
> The Psalms of David and the songs of Burns.'

The love of liberty will not die out in the land while the youth of America learn and love the verse of the poet who combines the lofty inspiration of David with the sweet simplicity of Burns."

This address was received with enthusiasm, and action was at once taken by the club to carry its proposition into effect. The testimonial took the form of a portfolio, in which was engrossed the speech of Senator Hoar, and an address signed by the officers and all the members of the Essex Club. Then follow many hundreds of autographs of state officials and distinguished citizens, representing every section and every interest of the Commonwealth. Next come the signatures of

fifty-nine United States Senators, the entire bench of the Supreme Court of the United States headed by Chief Justice Waite, Speaker Carlisle of the House of Representatives, and three hundred and thirty-three Members of the House, coming from every State and Territory in the Union. To these are added the names of many private citizens of distinction, such as George Bancroft, Robert C. Winthrop, James G. Blaine, and Frederick Douglass. This is an extract from Mr. Whittier's letter acknowledging the receipt of this testimonial: —

"I really know not how to acknowledge a testimonial of such proportions and character, the magnitude and value of which I fully appreciate. I can only say that I accept it with profound gratitude. I am deeply moved by the fact that political and sectional differences seem to have been wholly set aside by the signers, and that those from whom I have felt compelled to dissent in times past have cordially joined with my personal and political friends in this tribute of respect to a private citizen, who loves his whole country, and is devoutly thankful that the sun of his closing day shines upon a free and united people."

Mr. Whittier received his friends on his eightieth birthday at Oak Knoll, and fortunately had the strength for all the duties of hospitality to his guests. Governor Ames and his executive council came from Boston by special train to pay their respects to the aged poet, and they were accompanied by many distinguished citizens of Massachusetts and other States. When Mr. Whittier

led his company to the dining-room he called upon the governor to cut the birthday cake, while he himself helped in its distribution. He was so alert and active throughout the day that it was difficult to realize his age and invalidism. The "Boston Advertiser" issued a birthday number containing letters about Whittier and sonnets addressed to him, by Dr. Holmes, J. R. Lowell, Francis Parkman, Dr. F. H. Hedge, George F. Hoar, Dr. C. A. Bartol, Walt Whitman, Samuel Longfellow, Arlo Bates, and many others of the literary guild.

In 1887, Mr. George W. Childs, of Philadelphia, generously offered to defray the expense of a Milton memorial window in St. Margaret's Church, London. The offer was accepted, and in October of that year, Archdeacon Frederick W. Farrar wrote to him as follows: —

"The Milton window is making good progress. It will be, I hope, magnificently beautiful, and both in coloring and design will be worthy of your munificence, and worthy of the mighty poet to whose memory it will be dedicated. The artists are taking good pains with it. I sent you an outline of the sketch not long ago. Before the end of the year I hope to send you a painting of the complete work. Messrs. Clayton and Bell are putting forth their best strength, and promise me that it shall be finished before the end of the Jubilee Year. When it is put in, I shall make your gift more universally known. Mr. Lowell wrote me a quatrain for the Raleigh window. I can think of no one so suitable as Mr. J. G. Whittier to write four lines for the Milton window. Mr.

Whittier would feel the fullest sympathy for the great Puritan poet, whose spirit was so completely that of the Pilgrim Fathers. I have always loved and admired Mr. Whittier's poems. Could you ask him as a kindness to yourself and to me, and as a tribute to Milton's memory, if he would be so good as to write this brief inscription, which I would then have carved in marble or otherwise under the window. The same tablet will also record that it is your gift to the church of the House of Commons, which was dearer to Milton than any other."

Mr. Childs forwarded this letter to Mr. Whittier, who accepted the commission, and composed the following quatrain: —

> "The new world honors him whose lofty plea
> For England's freedom made her own more sure,
> Whose song, immortal as its theme, shall be
> Their common freehold while both worlds endure."

These lines were sent to Mr. Childs, to be forwarded to Archdeacon Farrar, in a letter from Mr. Whittier of which the following is a copy: —

"I am glad to comply with thy request and that of our friend Archdeacon Farrar. I hope the lines may be satisfactory. It is difficult to put all that could be said of Milton into four lines. How very heartfelt and noble thy benefactions are! Every one is a testimony of peace and good will. . . . I think even such a scholar as Dr. Farrar will not object to my use of the word 'freehold.' Milton himself uses it in the same way in his prose writings, viz.: 'I too have my chapter and *freehold* of rejoicing.'"

Mr. Whittier suggested to Dr. Farrar that if thought preferable the word "heirloom" might be substituted for "freehold." This is the Archdeacon's reply, dated January 2, 1888: —

"First let me express the wish that God's best blessings may rest on you and your house during this New Year. My personal gratitude and admiration have long been due to you for the noble influence you have exercised for the furtherance of forgotten but deeply needed truths. I have myself endeavored to do something to persuade men of the lesson you have so finely taught, — that God is a loving Father, not a terrific Moloch. Next let me thank you for the four lines on Milton. They are all that I can desire, and they will add to the interest which all Englishmen and Americans will feel in the beautiful Milton window. I think that if Milton had now been living, you are the poet whom he would have chosen to speak of him, as being the poet with whose whole tone of mind he would have been most in sympathy. . . . Unless you wish 'heirloom' to be substituted for 'freehold,' I will retain the latter as the original."

TO HARRIET MINOT PITMAN.

1st mo., 1888.

The lack of concentration of thought thee complains of is the result of nervous debility. I have for years suffered from it, and it is only by a painful effort that I can hold my thoughts steadily before me. But, after all, I think it may be quite as well. To have *fixed* ideas is insanity, and it is safest to let the mind wander a little at its own

sweet will. Some one has said, "Thinking is an idle waste of thought."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

2d mo., 9, 1888.

I am delighted to have such a favorable report from thee by Sarah's nice letter. Sitting by the peat fire, listening to Lowell's reading of his own verses! A convalescent princess with her minstrel in attendance! There may be a question as to curative properties of Dr. Lowell's dose, but that its flavor was agreeable I have no doubt. My own experience of the poetry cure was not satisfactory. Some years ago, when I was slowly getting up from illness, an honest friend of mine, an orthodox minister, in the very kindness of his heart thought to help me on by administering a poem in five cantos, illustrating the five points of Calvinism. I could only take a homœopathic dose of it. Its unmistakable flavor of brimstone disagreed with my stomach, probably because I was a Quaker.

TO THE SAME.

4th mo., 30, 1888.

I am thankful that I have lived to see another spring; to watch the slow, beautiful resurrection of Nature. A little north of us, as seen from our hills, the snow still lingers, but here the grass is greening in the lowlands, and the arbutus blooms among the pine needles. I have been at Amesbury for a fortnight. Somehow I seem nearer to my mother and sister; the very walls seem to have become sensitive to unseen presences. . . . I am

looking over the proofs of my verses for the new edition, with a strong desire to drown some of them like so many unlikely kittens. But my publishers say that there is no getting rid of them, that they have more than nine lives. I hope I am correcting a little of the bad grammar and rhythmical blunders which have so long annoyed my friends who have graduated at Harvard instead of a district country school.

TO THE SAME.

5th mo., 19, 1888.

I am sorry to find that the hard winter has destroyed some handsome spruces, which I planted eight years ago, and which had grown to be fine trees. Though rather late for me, I shall plant other trees in their places, for I remember the advice of the old Laird of Dombiedike to his son Jock: "When ye have nothing better to do, ye can be aye stickin' in a tree: it 'll be growin' when ye are sleepin'." There is an ash-tree growing here that my mother planted with her own hands, at threescore and ten. What agnostic folly to think that tree has *outlived* her who planted it! . . . I have read the letters of Jane Carlyle over again, and find that my first judgment of them was too severe. She was "cut out" for a very noble woman. Her wit and humor are simply marvelous. If she had married a man she really loved she would have been a happier and better woman. There is no excuse for Carlyle's shaking his fist in the face of the divine providence that had given him such a woman.

TO A LITERARY FRIEND IN SORROW.

8th mo., 30, 1888.

Ever since I saw thee in thy beautiful home, I have thought of thee, in the deep sympathy and earnest desire that with the dear memories of the past, hope and aspiration may be blended. I am glad to hear of thy literary work, not only for thy work's sake, but for thyself. I am sure thy experience of love and sorrow (are they ever far apart?) will bear fruit richer and sweeter for the loss and bitterness.

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD.[1]

10th mo., 22, 1888.

I congratulate you from my heart. You have my best wishes for your happiness and the full realization of "the one great purpose of creation, Love, the sole necessity of Earth and Heaven." There is nothing else worth living for. . . . I am not sure I am any better for my long life, any nearer to God, but He seems nearer to me, and that comforts me.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

12th mo., 14, 1888.

The report of the Associated Charities gives me a fuller comprehension of the magnitude as well as the need of the great work you have undertaken. It is the very science of charity; no longer blind instinct of indiscriminate pity, making the poverty it seeks to relieve, but a clear-eyed and wise benevolence, which helps the poor and suffering by aiding them to help themselves. . . . The winter

[1] On the occasion of her marriage.

opens drearily; still I mean to make the most and best of it. If I cannot read in these long evenings, I will think of what I have read; and if I cannot see my friends as often as I wish, I can take pleasure in thinking of them.

TO THE SAME.

12th mo., 19, 1888.

In the intervals of visitations on my birthday I wondered at my age, and if it was possible that I was the little boy on the old Haverhill farm, unknown, and knowing nobody beyond my home horizon. I could not quite make the connection of the white-haired man with the black-locked boy. I could not help a feeling of loneliness, thinking of having outlived so many of my life companions, but I was still grateful to God that I had not outlived my love for them, and for those still living. . . . Among the many tokens of good will from all parts of the country and beyond sea, there were some curious and amusing missives. One "secesh" woman took the occasion to include me in her curse of the "mean, hateful Yankees." To offset this I had a telegram from the Southern Forestry Commission, assembled at De Fanick Springs, Florida, signed by the president and secretary, informing me that "in remembrance of your birthday we have planted a live-oak tree to your memory, which, like the leaves of the tree, will be forever green."

In 1888, Mr. Whittier was asked to join W. D. Howells and others in petitioning the governor of Illinois for a commutation of the sentence of

the Chicago anarchists, who had been condemned to death. He replied that he had always opposed capital punishment, and wished that some other way had been taken in this case to satisfy the demands of justice; but he was not disposed to interfere in behalf of these criminals in preference to other murderers less dangerous to the community than they. This incident was related by a writer in the "New York Tribune," who reported a conversation with Mr. Whittier in a manner that seemed hardly fair to Mr. Howells, who wrote a friendly letter to Whittier about it. This is the poet's reply, dated 12th mo., 19, 1888: —

"I have not the 'Tribune' letter to refer to. I saw it and hastily glanced at it in the midst of interviewers and callers on my birthday, and do not recollect the exact words of the passage referred to in thy note. I see that I should have stated so clearly that I could not be misunderstood the facts of the case, as I remember them, viz.: that I was asked to join thee in petitioning the governor of Illinois to commute the sentence of the anarchists. I think thee stated that thee thought they had not had a fair trial, and that this induced thee to urge the petition. In conversing with the writer of the letter, I think I said that I supposed thee thought that the extreme penalty of death might cause the victims to be regarded as martyrs; and I mentioned that thy interest in Count Tolstoi's non-resistance views, with which I have much sympathy myself, may have influenced thee in this case. The writer of the 'Tribune' letter is a truthful and honorable gentleman, and if his ver-

sion of the matter is incorrect it is doubtless owing to a lack of explicitness on my part, in a desultory conversation. Our relations as authors and friends have been too intimate and pleasant to allow me to even unintentionally misrepresent thee. I would be the last person to believe that the crime charged upon the accused persons is less detestable and awful to thee than to myself."

Mr. Whittier had all his life the care and interest of a statesman in regard to the details of governmental policy, and never resisted the temptation to give his advice, encouragement, and warning to persons in power, especially if they were of his own party and would be likely on that account to listen to him. Notwithstanding his natural modesty and habit of self-depreciation, he realized that his name was one that could be conjured with, in his later years, and did not hesitate to try its powers for any cause in which, or any person in whom, he was interested. In 1887, he wrote to a friend: "I feel sometimes that I have a word to say that is needed, but I have not felt strong enough to write, so the world must get on without my shoulder to the wheel, and I guess it will." His shoulder had been so long at the wheel that it had become the habit of his life, and it was difficult to break himself of it, even when old age and weakness gave him good excuse for inaction. In all great reforms there are among the leaders some narrow and active men who maintain their leadership because so narrow in their views. Of the wedge of reform they make the sharp point. Some one has said of Wesley that he was so intent

upon the work before him that he would not have seen an African bison to the right or left of him. Mr. Whittier had none of this narrowness, but took a wide view of the field in which he worked.

TO THE ESSEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

12th mo., 30, 1888.

My ancestors since 1640 have been farmers in Essex County. I was early initiated into the mysteries of farming as it was practiced seventy years ago, and worked faithfully on the old Haverhill homestead until, at the age of thirty years, I was compelled to leave it, greatly to my regret. Ever since, if I have envied anybody, it has been the hale, strong farmer, who could till his own acres, and if he needed help could afford to hire it, because he was able to lead the work himself. I have lived to see a great and favorable change in the farming population of Essex County. The curse of intemperance is now almost unknown among them; the rumseller has no mortgage on their lands. As a rule, they are intelligent, well informed, and healthy, interested in public affairs, self-respectful and respected, independent landholders, fully entitled, if any class is, to the name of gentleman. It may be said that they are not millionaires, and that their annual gains are small. But, on the other hand, the farmer rests secure while other occupations and professions are in constant fear of disaster; his dealing directly and honestly with the Almighty is safer than speculation; his life is no game of chance, and his investments in the earth are better than in stock

companies and syndicates. As to profits, if our farmers could care less for the comfort of themselves and their families, if they could consent to live as their ancestors once lived, and as the pioneers in new countries now live, they could with their present facilities, no doubt, double their incomes. But what a pitiful gain this would be at the expense of the delicacies and refinements that make life worth living. No better proof of real gains can be found than the creation of pleasant homes for the comfort of age and the happiness of youth. When the great English critic Matthew Arnold was in this country, on returning from a visit in Essex County, he remarked that while the land looked to him rough and unproductive, the landlords' houses seemed neat and often elegant. "But where," he asked, "do the tenants, the working people live?" He seemed surprised when I told him that the tenants were the landlords and the workers the owners.

It was in 1888 that the definitive "Riverside" edition of Mr. Whittier's writings was published, in seven volumes, four given to poetry and three to prose. He prepared a number of head-notes upon the general plan adopted in the "Riverside" edition of Longfellow's writings issued two years before, and gave close attention to the final form of the text.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

4th mo., 3, 1889.

Spring is here to-day, warm, bird-full, blossoming with crocuses, snowdrops, and willows. Prob-

ably the east wind will scare her away to-morrow. It seems strange to me that I am here alive to welcome her, when so many have passed away with the winter, and among them that stalwartest of Englishmen, John Bright, sleeping now in the daisied grounds of Rochdale, never more to move the world with his surprising eloquence. How I regret that I have never seen him! We had much in common — in our religious faith, our hatred of war and oppression. His great genius seemed to me to be always held firmly in hand by a sense of duty, and by the practical common sense of a shrewd man of business. He fought through life like an old knight-errant, but without enthusiasm. He had no personal ideals. I remember how he remonstrated with me for my admiration of General Gordon. He looked upon that wonderful personality as a wild fighter, a rash adventurer, doing evil that good might come. He could not see him, as I saw him, giving his life for humanity, alone and unfriended in that dreadful Soudan. He did not like the idea of fighting Satan with Satan's own weapons. Lord Salisbury said truly that he was the greatest orator England had produced; and his eloquence was only called out by what he regarded as the voice of God in his soul.

TO THE SAME.

CONWAY, N. H., 7th mo., 24, 1889.

My cousins and I have been here for the past week, with some other friends of ours. The weather has been delightful, and Chocorua and Moat are looking their best. We have just re-

turned from the banks of the Saco, where it is joined by the Swift River — a very fine bit for a painter.[1] This rainy season has left the mid-summer greener if possible than June, and I never saw the Saco intervales more lovely.

Mr. Whittier had serious misgivings in regard to his poem "The Vow of Washington," written in 1889 for the centennial commemoration of the inauguration of the first President of the Republic, and desired to recall it after it had left his hands. He wrote to a friend: "I heartily wish I had not been over-persuaded to write for the occasion. I am ashamed of it." To a friend who was to attend the celebration, and who made the suggestion that he had better read his own poem to the assembled thousands, he wrote: "I think I see myself shouting my verses in New York! I don't care who reads them. They are not worth much, anyway. If the critics find fault with them, as they will, I shall join with them, as Charles Lamb hissed his own play as heartily as the audience. I scarcely think it will pay for thee to go to the great fuss. I should like to hear Depew if I were fifty years younger and were not jammed and elbowed by a crowd." It was a great relief to him when he found that he had struck a chord to which the whole country responded with enthusiasm. There was a report that Whittier would himself read his centennial

[1] A beautiful picture, in water colors, of the confluence of the two rivers, painted by one of the guests, and presented to him, was a much prized souvenir.

poem, and President Barnard wrote to him to make his home with him while in New York. To this Whittier replied: —

My dear old Friend of the old days, — I have authorized no such "public notice" as thy letter speaks of. The idea of reading my own verses to a New York audience is utterly absurd. But I would be glad to visit New York, if for no other reason than to accept the kind invitation of thyself and thy wife; but I am hardly in condition to travel far from home. I often think of thee and of the pleasant Hartford days, and wish I could meet thee again. What a way we have traveled since we met under the Charter Oak! We have both reason to be thankful to the good Providence which has brought us thus far.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

September 2, 1889.

Here I am at your side among the octogenarians. At seventy we are objects of veneration; at eighty, of curiosity; at ninety, of wonder; and if we reach a hundred we are candidates for a side show attached to Barnum's great exhibition. You know all about it. You know why I have not thanked you before this for your beautiful and precious tribute, which would make any birthday memorable. I remember how you were overwhelmed with tributes on the occasion of your own eightieth birthday, and you can understand the impossibility I find before me of responding in any fitting shape to all the tokens of friendship

which I receive. . . . I hope, dear Whittier, that you find much to enjoy in the midst of all the lesser trials which old age must bring with it. You have kind friends all around you, and the love and homage of your fellow-countrymen as few have enjoyed, with the deep satisfaction of knowing that you have earned them, not merely by the gifts of your genius, but by a noble life which has ripened without a flaw into a grand and serene old age. I never see my name coupled with yours, as it often is nowadays, without feeling honored by finding myself in such company, and wishing that I were more worthy of it. . . . I am living here with my daughter-in-law, and just as I turned this leaf I heard wheels at the door, and she got out, leading in in triumph her husband, His Honor, Judge Holmes of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, just arrived from Europe, by the Scythia. I look up to him as my magistrate, and he knows me as his father, but my arms are around his neck and his moustache is sweeping my cheek — I feel young again at fourscore.

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

11th mo., 7, 1889.

There is very little of actual suffering which may not be traced to intemperance, idleness, and utter lack of economy, wasteful and careless of the future when wages are good. We need the gospel of Poor Richard's Almanac sadly. Last summer, in Conway, I found a town without a poor-house, because there was nobody that needed it. There

were no rich men, but the village was a model of neatness, every house freshly painted and comfortable. The young clergyman had a salary of $400 a year, and I was told that the cost of living was less than $300 per family. There was no liquor allowed in the place. The small savings bank had a deposit of $80,000. With economy, sobriety, and the absence of ostentation, display, and extravagance, the example of Conway might be imitated in our country towns, and to some extent in our cities. But I suppose this is not to be expected. The poor we shall always have with us — until Bellamy's millennium.

TO THE SAME.

12th mo., 12, 1889.

I came to Amesbury yesterday, where I hope my birthday will pass quietly. As life draws nearer the close, one feels desirous to be near the old home and the unforgotten landscape of youth, and to muse by the same fireside where our dear ones used to sit.

TO GEORGE B. LORING.

12th mo., 1889.

It was a very beautiful and fitting thing for the minister of the United States at Lisbon to offer his apartments to Dom Pedro, — the noble ex-emperor, who carried with him into retirement the love and respect of the world. Will thee give him my sincerest love, and tell him that were our dear Longfellow living he would join me in affectionate remembrances.

GEORGE B. LORING TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

LISBON, December 22, 1889.

I was happy in being able to make the old emperor comfortable. He looks very old, has no light or joy in his face, and dwells on the past with touching devotion. He talks of you and Longfellow and Agassiz, and Alexander Agassiz and Quincy Shaw, as if you had all been his brothers.

Mr. Whittier's eighty-second birthday was spent quietly at Amesbury. The day was observed quite generally in the schools throughout the country. The school children of Amesbury marched in procession to his house, and he made a few remarks to them. One of the gifts he received was a beautiful phial of gold sand from Africa, the golden cover of which was ornamented with a fine sapphire and a clasp of diamonds. This was from Abby Hutchinson Patton, to whom he wrote: "Thy name recalls the noble men and women who devoted their lives to the holy cause of freedom. None more worthily bore their part in the great contest than thy brothers and thyself. I always think of dear N. P. Rogers when I think of you. How he loved you and your songs!"

Among the letters and gifts which came to him from all parts of the United States, and from other countries, on these occasions, none touched him more deeply and gave him more pleasure than the affectionate remembrances of the students in the seminaries of the colored people at the South. Their gratitude and reverence for their benefactor

were expressed in many quaint ways. On more than one occasion, he received barrels of pitch-pine kindlings for his fire, from the colored schools of Alabama and other Gulf States.

When wearied by a prolonged conversation in his garden room, his never-failing resource was to go to the closet for a stick of wood for his fire, or for a choice pear he had been ripening for his guest. The thread of many a long-winded discourse was broken by such devices. Dr. Maria Dowdell-Wilson, who was for a large part of her life a neighbor, and always an intimate friend, says of his care of the fire: —

"That fire was a perpetual source of pleasure and annoyance to us all. It was an old-fashioned Franklin stove, that smoked on the slightest provocation, and scattered the ashes over the hearth. At the same time it had a habit of throwing out the most charming gleams and shadows, especially if drift-wood was being burned. Mr. Whittier was very jealous of any one else tending or poking the fire. Often I have unconsciously taken the tongs to touch up a brand, when his hand would stay mine, and he would say, 'Thee must not touch that, it is just right,' and perhaps the next minute he would have the tongs and do just what I had attempted. I have frequently gone in at twilight and found him lying on the lounge, watching the flitting shadows, and repeating aloud from some favorite author, generally Scott or Burns. His mood and conversation at such times were particularly delightful. The beautiful poem 'Burning Drift-Wood' was doubtless inspired by such experiences."

Mrs. Pitman wrote to him in 1885: "You were a veritable fire-worshiper. I see you coming from the closet, bringing wood. Now I see you by the stove, *sitting on nothing*. You had a firm backbone, as was suitable to a Quaker and an old abolitionist." The attitude to which reference is here made will be recognized by all who knew him in his home. He never stooped as do most people when they reach to a level below their knees, but came down upon his right knee with the bent left knee thrown forward, holding his body perfectly upright. This attitude was assumed whenever he had occasion to pick up anything, when he teased the cat, when he took a book from a low shelf, and when he tended his fire.

One of the birthday gifts in 1889 was a handsome portfolio from Herman Marcus, a New York merchant, containing a picture of a golden vase, exquisitely graceful in form, and ornamented with garlands of delicate flowers. It had for inscription, "May in the smallest part thy sorrows lie concealed, and all the rest be filled with joy to overflowing." It was accompanied by a letter explaining that the conception of the vase, with its allegory and legend, originated in a delightful dream at the mountain home of Mr. Marcus, which is near Centre Harbor.

TO LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

2d mo., 1890.

My dear cousin Gertrude read in her beautiful way thy poems under the head of "The Still Hour," and was greatly moved by their pathetic

power. I wish thee could have her serene, clear faith in the future life. But I think it will come to thee some time. Emerson once said to me, "If there is a future life for us, it is well; if there is not, it is well also." For myself, I trust in the mercy of the All Merciful. What is best for us we shall have, and Life and Love are best.

TO LUCY LARCOM.

2d mo., 28, 1890.

I do not wonder that "the Church" commends itself to thy mind and heart, so far as it is represented by Phillips Brooks. But I am too much of a Quaker to find a home there. Quakerism has no church of its own — it belongs to the Church Universal and Invisible.

A few weeks of the summer of 1890 were spent by Mr. Whittier at a quiet and pleasant place on the Piscataqua River, in Eliot, Maine, known as "Green Acre." Writing from this place to his old friend Mrs. Elizabeth Gay, of Staten Island, he says: "I have been staying here for the last fortnight, — my first outing in nearly a year. It is a quiet hotel on the banks of the Piscataqua River, new, neat, and comfortable, and not near enough to the railroad to be crowded. My cousins Joseph and Gertrude Cartland are with me. . . . Has thee read Dr. Holmes's new poem in the last 'Atlantic Monthly'? At eighty-one he is as witty as ever. If I may not imitate his light-hearted verse, I am thankful I can enjoy it."

Mr. Whittier took great interest in the deaf and

the blind, and had friends and correspondents among those who had the misfortune to be deprived of sight and hearing. Selections from his works were printed in raised letters for the use of the blind, in the Perkins Institution at South Boston. In the summer of 1890, he wrote to little Helen Keller, who is both deaf and blind, and on his next birthday he received from her an affectionate reply, written with her own hand in the square characters she had been taught to make with the apparatus invented for the use of the blind. This is her letter: —

Dear kind Poet, — This is your birthday: that was the first thought which came into my mind when I awoke this morning, and it made me glad to think I could write you a letter and tell you how much your little blind friends love their sweet poet and his birthday. This evening they are going to entertain their friends with readings from your poems and music. I hope the swift-winged messenger of love will be here to carry some of the sweet melody to you in your little study by the Merrimac. At first I was very sorry when I found that the sun had hidden himself behind dull clouds, but afterwards I thought why he did so, and then I was happy. The sun knows that you like to see the world covered with beautiful snow, so he kept back all of his brightness so that the little crystals could form in the sky, and when they are ready they will softly fall and tenderly cover every object. Then the sun will appear in all his radiance and fill the world with light. If I

were with you to-day I would give you eighty-three kisses, one for each year you have lived. Eighty-three years seems very long to me. Does it seem long to you? I wonder how many years there will be in eternity. I am afraid I cannot think about so much time. I received the letter which you wrote to me last summer, and I thank you for it. I am staying in Boston now, at the Institution for the Blind, but I have not commenced my studies yet, because my dearest friend, Mr. Anagnos, wants me to rest and play a great deal. Teacher is well and sends her kind remembrances to you. The happy Christmas time is almost here! I can hardly wait for the fun to begin! I hope your Christmas Day will be a very happy one and that the new year will be full of brightness and joy for you and every one.

From your loving little friend,

HELEN A. KELLER.

To this letter Mr. Whittier replied: —

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND, — I was very glad to have such a pleasant letter on my birthday. I had two or three hundred others, and thine was one of the most welcome of all. I must tell thee about how the day passed at Oak Knoll. Of course, the sun did not shine, but we had great open wood fires in the rooms, which were all very sweet with roses and other flowers, which were sent to me from distant friends; and fruits of all kinds from California and other places. Some relatives and dear old friends were with me through the day. I

do not wonder thee think eighty-three years a long time, but to me it seems but a very little while since I was a boy no older than thee, playing on the old farm at Haverhill. I thank thee for all thy good wishes, and wish thee as many. I am glad thee is at the Institution; it is an excellent place. Give my best regards to Miss Sullivan, and with a great deal of love I am thy old friend.

In 1890 Mr. Whittier published for private circulation among his friends the little volume of his latest poems, entitled "At Sundown," which two years later was given to the public, with additional poems. It included "Burning Drift-Wood," "The Captain's Well," "Haverhill," "The Last Eve of Summer," and quite a number of shorter pieces, written during the year. When Mr. Whittier wrote "The Captain's Well," he had the impression that Captain Valentine Bagley was at the time of his shipwreck the master of the vessel, and that he was the head of a family. But when he learned, after the publication of the poem, that he was then a young man, unmarried, he changed the second stanza to correspond with the facts. The original version was: —

> "Back to his home, where wife and child,
> Who had mourned him lost, with joy were wild."

As amended it stands: —

> "And like one from the dead, the threshold crossed
> Of his wondering home, that had mourned him lost."

Of this poem James Russell Lowell wrote: "Your 'Captain's Well' seems to me in your hap-

piest vein, — a vein peculiarly your own. Tears came to my eyes as I read it."

TO LUCY LARCOM.

5th mo., 9, 1891.

As I could not hear Phillips Brooks if I went to his church, I prefer he should be bishop. The very air of Massachusetts seems more free and sweet for his election. It is a great step forward. He is bishop, not only of the Episcopal Church, but of all New England!

A part of the summer of 1891 was spent by Mr. Whittier and his friends at a quiet hotel in Wakefield, N. H. His health was not up to even its usual standard, but he longed to be again among his favorite hills, and this place was chosen for its easy access, its bracing air, and the beauty of its surroundings; but his stay at Wakefield was shortened, as at Conway two years before, by increased feebleness, which called him back to Newburyport and the care of his physician.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

NEWBURYPORT, 8th mo., 18, 1891.

Ever since I heard the sad news of Lowell's death, I have been thinking of thee, and longing to see thee, for we are now standing alone. The bright, beautiful ones who began life with us have all passed into the great shadow of silence, or rather, let us hope, in the language of Henry Vaughan, "They have gone into the world of light, and we alone are lingering here!" Well, I at

least shall soon follow them, and I wait the call with a calm trust in the Eternal Goodness. I have been ill all summer, but the world is still fair to me; my friends are very dear to me; I love and am loved. And it is a great joy to me that I can think of thee as well, and in the full enjoyment of all thy gifts and powers, surrounded still with friends who love and honor thee.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES TO JOHN G. WHITTIER.

BEVERLY FARMS, September 3, 1891.

I am longing to see you, and if you are coming to Danvers, you must expect me to drive over for an hour's talk with you. As I have often said, we, — that is, you and I — now, are no longer on a raft, but we are on a spar. I have been well in general health, but have had a good deal of asthma. This climate is too cool and rough for me, but I have found much that is delightful about my residence here. Perhaps the fault is not so much in latitude 42 degrees, as in æt. 82.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

9th mo., 8, 1891.

I am most happy to know that I may expect a visit from thee as soon as the present wet weather permits. I need not tell thee how glad I shall be to see thee before I let go that "spar" and leave it to thee alone. This climate is hard upon us, but it is a part of our New England, and I would not exchange for any other. Danton would not run away from the guillotine because he could not carry France off with him on his boots.

TO THE SAME.

9th mo., 21, 1891.

DEAR HOLMES, — The last and noblest word has been spoken by thy lines on Lowell. As a work of artistic beauty and fitness it has no rival in our literature, and it will last as long as his ode on Lincoln — and that is saying much. Thanks to our Heavenly Father that He has given thee the power to write it!

Mr. Whittier wrote his lines on James Russell Lowell and two other poems this year, "The Birthday Wreath" and "Between the Gates."

In November, 1891, Whittier was again in Newburyport, and it is a coincidence of some interest that the residence of his cousin, Joseph Cartland, where he spent so many of his later days, was once occupied by the Hon. Edward St. Loe Livermore, who represented the Essex District in Congress from 1807 to 1812, and who was the father of the eccentric Harriet Livermore, the "not unfeared, half-welcome guest" alluded to in "Snow-Bound." On the occasion of his eighty-fourth and last birthday, sixty members of the Whittier Club of Haverhill, his native town, called in the morning, bringing with their congratulations eighty-four roses encircled with a scarf, upon the ends of which were etchings of Whittier's birthplace and the old schoolhouse of his boyhood. Three of his aged schoolmates added to the interest of the occasion by their presence: Mrs. Warren Ordway of Bradford, Thomas B. Garland of Dover, N. H., and Hon. James H. Carleton of Haverhill. Mr. Whit-

tier greatly enjoyed this opportunity to recall incidents of his youth. Another of his school friends who came was Mrs. Bartlett, mother of William Francis Bartlett, to whom Whittier paid the tribute commencing: —

> "Oh, well may Essex sit forlorn
> Beside her sea-blown shore;
> Her well-beloved, her noblest born
> Is hers in life no more!"

In reply to the congratulatory address of George C. How, president of the Whittier Club, Mr. Whittier made one of the very few speeches of his life, in which he said that, the proverb to the contrary, he had found that a prophet is sometimes honored in his own country. The rooms of the spacious house were filled with birthday gifts, and telegrams, express packages, and letters were constantly being received. Mr. Whittier manifested a lively interest in whatever was going on, and greeted each visitor in the most cordial manner. He particularly enjoyed the calls of his life-long friend, Charles F. Coffin of Lynn, of Mrs. Fields, Mrs. Claflin, Sarah Orne Jewett, Alice Freeman Palmer, Francis J. Garrison, and Harriet McEwen Kimball. This tender greeting came from Phillips Brooks: "I have no right, save that which love and gratitude and reverence may give, to say how devoutly I thank God that you have lived, that you are living, and that you will always live."

As evening approached, and the last guest departed, Mr. Whittier did not seem as much fatigued as on some previous occasions of a similar character. He joined the family at the tea-table

with his accustomed cheerfulness, recalling many pleasant incidents of the day, and the delightful meetings with old friends, and remarking that he had never passed a more comfortable and happy birthday.

Among the letters received was this from Dr. Holmes: "I congratulate you upon having climbed another glacier and crossed another crevasse in your ascent of the white summit which already begins to see the morning twilight of the coming century. A life so well filled as yours has been cannot be too long for your fellow-men. In their affections you are secure, whether you are with them here or near them in some higher life than theirs. I hope your years have not become a burden, so that you are tired of living. At our age we must live chiefly in the past: happy is he who has a past like yours to look back upon. It is one of the felicitous incidents — I will not say accidents — of my life that the lapse of time has brought us very near together, so that I frequently find myself honored by seeing my name mentioned in near connection with your own. We are lonely, very lonely, in these last years. The image which I have used before this in writing to you recurs once more to my thought. We were on deck together as we began the voyage of life two generations ago. A whole generation passed and the succeeding one found us in the cabin, with a goodly number of coevals. Then the craft which held us began going to pieces, until a few of us were left on the raft pieced together of its fragments. And now the raft has at last parted, and you and I are left

clinging to the solitary spar, which is all that still remains afloat of the sunken vessel.

"I have just been looking over the headstones in Mr. Griswold's cemetery, entitled 'The Poets and Poetry of America.' In that venerable receptacle, just completing its half century of existence — for the date of the edition before me is 1842 — I find the names of John Greenleaf Whittier and Oliver Wendell Holmes next each other, in their due order, as they should be. All around are the names of the dead — too often of forgotten dead. Three which I see there are still living: Mr. John Osborne Sargent, who makes Horace his own by faithful study and ours by scholarly translation; Isaac McLellan, who was writing in 1830, and whose last work is dated 1886; and Christopher P. Cranch, whose poetical gift has too rarely found expression. Of these many dead you are the most venerated, revered, and beloved survivor; of these few living, the most honored representative. Long may it be before you leave a world where your influence has been so beneficent, where your example has been such inspiration, where you are so truly loved, and where your presence is a perpetual benediction."

Among the telegrams received on his last birthday was one from the Indian poetess of Ontario, E. Pauline Johnson, who said, "Your young Mohawk friend asks for you to-day the Great Spirit's blessing." Another dispatch was received from an Indian girl whom Whittier had befriended. Seven hundred students of Vassar College united in sending a telegram, and pupils of the Gloucester

high school sent congratulations, "to our loved singer, the wood-thrush of Essex."

His old friend, Dr. Henry I. Bowditch, wrote: "How beautiful is this uprising of a people to do the poet honor for life-long defense of liberty and righteousness. I do so wish to see you at least once more in this world, but I quiet that desire at times by repeating some of your poetry, which has been such a blessing to all of us." To this Whittier replied: "Like thee I am mostly confined to the house, and I am finding the weight of years heavy to bear. But I thank God that my love for the old friends still left is deeper than ever." About three weeks later, Miss Olivia Y. Bowditch thus announced to Mr. Whittier the death of her father: "My father's love for you makes me wish to tell you myself that his burden, so bravely borne, is laid down, and we can think of him at rest. I should also like to tell you that all through the summer, when often his spirit was heavy, I would read to him from your poems, as we sat together, and he would invariably say that strength had come to him from your words. Your last note to him he deeply prized, and it made him very happy."

Among the pleasant testimonials received by Mr. Whittier was a letter from James W. Taylor, United States consul at Winnipeg, Manitoba, informing him that at midnight, with the last stroke of the clock ushering in the seventeenth day of December, 1891, the eighty-fourth anniversary of his birth, the bells of Saint Boniface, commemorated in his beautiful lyric "The Red River Voyageur," rang a joy peal, at the suggestion of

Lieutenant-Governor John Schultz, and by direction of His Grace Archbishop Tâché. This delicate compliment was subsequently acknowledged by Whittier in the following letter: —

"During my illness from the prevailing epidemic, which confined me nearly the whole winter, and from which I am but very slowly recovering, a letter from the United States consul at Winnipeg informed me of thy pleasant recognition of my little poem, 'The Red River Voyageur' (written nearly forty years ago), by the ringing of the bells of Saint Boniface on the eve of my late anniversary. I was at the time quite unable to respond, but I feel that I should be wanting in due appreciation of such a marked compliment if I did not, even at this late hour, express to thee my heartfelt thanks. I have reached an age when literary success and manifestations of popular favor have ceased to satisfy one upon whom the solemnity of life's sunset is resting; but such a delicate and beautiful tribute has deeply moved me. I shall never forget it. I shall hear the bells of Saint Boniface sounding across the continent, and awakening a feeling of gratitude for thy generous act."

TO ANNIE FIELDS.

NEWBURYPORT, 12th mo., 10, 1891.

Will it not be possible for thee to be with me on the 17th? I do not expect any crowd here; but I should be very sorry to miss of seeing thee. If dear Sarah Jewett is in Boston, take her with thee. I feel sure thee will come if possible. It is not likely that many more such occasions will

occur. I inclose some rhymes hastily penciled years ago, a copy of which I have lately found.[1]

TO THE SAME.

NEWBURYPORT, 12th mo., 29, 1891.

The best thing on my birthday was to meet thee and our dear Sarah on the stairs, and the worst was that you went away so soon. Looking at the wreath which still hangs all right in our dining-room, I am tempted to let myself down to poetry: —

"Blossom and greenness, making all
The wintry birthday tropical,
And the plain Quaker parlors gay,
Have died on bracket, stand, and wall.
I saw them fade and droop and fall,
And laid them tenderly away.

"White virgin lilies, mignonette,
Blown rose and pink and violet, —
A breath of fragrance passing by,
A dream of beauty and decay,
Colors and shapes which could not stay, —
The fairest, sweetest, first to die.

"But still this rustic wreath of thine
Of wintergreen, and bay, and pine,
The wild growths of our forest land,
Woven and wound with careful pains,
And tender wish and prayer, remains,
As when it dropped from love's dear hand."[2]

[1] *An Out-Door Reception*, first published after Mr. Whittier's death.

[2] Considerable changes were made in these lines afterward, two new verses were added, and the poem as thus completed was included in *At Sundown*, under the title *The Birthday Wreath*.

TO THE SAME.

NEWBURYPORT, 1st mo., 29, 1892.

I am glad to be able to hold the pen once more in proof that the terrible "grippe" has relaxed its hold. I have been very near the border-land, — so near that the world seemed to drop away from me, and nothing was left but trust and love. I am still very weak, though I sit up several hours a day.

The severe attack to which he refers in this letter nearly proved fatal, but as spring advanced he gained strength, and when able to leave his room and rejoin the family in the library, he remarked that at times he had hardly expected to pass down the hall stairs again, but was thankful for the calm trust and perfect rest with which he was favored; "not an anxiety," he added, "not a care; it was not ecstasy, but inexpressible peace."

With improving health he began to suggest little plans for the coming summer, saying he hoped to visit Centre Harbor once more, and asking his cousins, the Cartlands, if they would accompany him. By the latter part of April he was able to spend a few weeks in Danvers, and in May he was again in Amesbury, to meet his friends in what proved his last Quarterly Meeting. As summer approached, and his strength seemed insufficient for the journey to Centre Harbor, he proposed spending a little time with his friend Sarah A. Gove, at "Elmfield," Hampton Falls, N. H., seven miles from Amesbury, and to take Centre Harbor later, if it seemed advisable.

Here, in company with congenial friends, and

sheltered from wearisome intrusion, he was often heard to say, "I have not known such a rest as this for forty years; not one pilgrim for three weeks!" He had been familiar with the place from his boyhood, the house having been occupied by friends of his family for several generations. Thus favorably situated his strength improved. He was in the frequent practice of taking short walks, to the post office and other points near by, and sometimes wandered as far as the falls, and enjoyed the beautiful river-path. He would occasionally drive about among his former haunts. In the immediate vicinity was the home of his maternal ancestor, the Rev. Stephen Bachilder, and he took a lively interest in all the historic associations of the place.[1]

He would sometimes make facetious reference to Miss Gove's descent from the Edward Gove who figured in the history of New Hampshire as the leader in "Gove's rebellion," and who was captured, tried, condemned, and sentenced to be hanged, but who for some reason (perhaps the death of Charles II.) escaped execution of the sentence, and was finally released from imprisonment in the Tower of London, and returned to his home in New Hampshire. An English fowling-

[1] The house in which the revolutionary governor, Meshech Weare, lived and died, and where Washington was entertained when he visited New England in 1788, was within easy walking distance; his steps were frequently turned in that direction, where a cordial welcome always awaited him. He would examine with much curiosity the paneled staircase and partitions, and the hunting scenes depicted upon the heavy wall-papers, some of which were fastened to the walls by hand-made nails instead of paste.

piece, ornamented with a golden serpent set in its stock, said to have been given him by the king, is one of the relics of Miss Gove's spirited ancestor, now in her possession.

Among the few letters written by Mr. Whittier in the month of August were the two that follow.

TO FRANCES E. WILLARD.

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 11, 1892.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, — I cannot let cousin Gertrude's letter go without expressing my deep and tender sympathy with thee. I know what it is to lose a mother, — a loss I have never forgotten. But how much we have to be thankful for in the blessed assurance that all is well with our dear ones!

> "Go, call for the mourner and raise the lament;
> Let the tresses be torn and the garments be rent;
> But give to the living the passion of tears,
> Who walk in a valley of sadness and fears;
> Who are pressed in the combat, in darkness are lost;
> But weep not for those who shall sorrow no more,
> Whose warfare is ended, whose trial is o'er.
> Let the song be exalted, triumphant the chord,
> And rejoice for the dead who die in the Lord!"

I am sure the calling hence of thy beloved mother will only stimulate thee in thy work for the living. We can leave our dead with the Lord; they are safe with Him. His blessing be with thee!

TO ELISABETH CAVAZZA.

HAMPTON FALLS, 8th mo., 19, 1892.

I don't believe that half of the nice things the papers are saying of thy little book reach thee.

Here is a clipping from the ——, the best and ablest literary paper in the country. With loving remembrance from thy friend.

He read more or less each day, keeping well informed of current events, and was seldom absent from the morning Bible readings. His only literary work during the summer, beside the attention that he gave to his correspondence, was the writing of the poem addressed to Oliver Wendell Holmes upon his eighty-third birthday, August 29, and correcting the proof of his new volume "At Sundown," which was then going through the press.

TO OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 26, 1892.

DEAR HOLMES, — I intended to write something for thy birthday, but the thought suggested itself that I might get it into the September "Atlantic." I wrote some verses in a great hurry, as I knew the time of publication was near. A friend copied them and omitted one verse. I discovered the mistake and sent the "missing link," but it was too late.[1] I send with this the poem as I wrote it. It was written on the hottest day of the season, and that must excuse its defects. With a great deal of love, thy friend.

[1] This mistake seriously annoyed Mr. Whittier, but in a letter about it to his publishers he said pleasantly, "I think anybody who undertakes to make verses in his eighty-fifth year, on the hottest day of the hottest season, deserves to suffer for it."

TO ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS WARD.[1]

HAMPTON FALLS, N. H., 8th mo., 30, 1892.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I write no letters now. But I went to my room to tell thee how I liked thy strong and noble poem in the "Atlantic" ["The Lost Colors"], when my mail came with thy most kind note. I thank thee most warmly for it. It was a curious coincidence. God bless thee!

Affectionately, JOHN G. WHITTIER.

The perfect freedom he felt in the home of his friend was observed by visitors, as he escorted them through the rooms, calling attention to various attractions and pointing out fine views from the windows, and the magnificent elms upon the lawn, dating back to the colonial days, one of which, by his own measurement, had a trunk eighteen feet eight inches in circumference, and another seventeen feet. But the tender personal associations had a charm for him beyond even the beauties of the landscape, and one day, when sitting under the trees with a group of young people around him, he exclaimed with much enthusiasm, "This is a very sweet spot to me: I used to come here with my mother."

On the wide balcony upon which the door of his room opened he passed many happy hours, looking admiringly out upon the broad Hampton meadows and watching the distant ships. His poems, "The New Wife and the Old," "Hampton Beach," "The Wreck of Rivermouth," and

[1] This is one of three letters written on this day — the last letters he ever wrote.

others, were suggested by scenes and incidents in this neighborhood.

After a few weeks at Hampton Falls his cousin alluded to his intention of spending some time at Centre Harbor, and asked if he still had it in prospect, to which he replied: "I have been thinking about it, but have given it up, it is so pleasant here, and we are having such a comfortable, happy summer; but," he added, with his usual thoughtfulness for others, "if any of you wish to go there, I will remain here in your absence." His conclusion was equally satisfactory to his friends, and the party continued unbroken the rest of the summer.

The "last eve of summer," which he so pathetically commemorated two years before, found him prostrated by illness, suffering from such an attack as he was liable to at that season of the year, and which he himself was inclined to regard lightly. The remedies used not having the desired effect, his physician, Dr. J. A. Douglass of Amesbury, was called, and under his treatment he became much better; the third day he felt so well that he walked across the hall and joined his friends in cheerful conversation, proposing to return to Newburyport early the next week. On the morning of September 3, shortly after rising, he experienced a paralytic shock, which so affected his right side that he was confined to his bed, and the condition of his throat was such that speaking and taking medicines and nourishment were extremely difficult. When his illness assumed this serious character, and there seemed slight hope of his rallying, his friends who were with him feared

he might regret his absence from home, as he had many times expressed a hope that his last illness might be in Amesbury, where his beloved mother and sister had lived and died; but he accepted his situation with sweet composure, often saying in slowly uttered and broken sentences, "It is all right — everybody is so kind."

His consideration for the feelings of his correspondents was shown in a marked way in the last week of his life. There came to him from a Western State a letter from an author of whom he had never before heard, who said he had sent him a volume of his poems for which he had received no acknowledgment. Then followed an impudent lecture upon his duty in such a case. "A letter of acknowledgment and a volume of his own works should have been sent," as had been done by other poets, who were named. No one could read such a letter without anger at its insolence and presumption. When Mr. Whittier's letters were being read to him, and his attendant came to this, it was supposed that he would do no more than have his angry correspondent informed that his book had not reached him, as he was away from home, and that this ungracious letter was the first intimation he had received of his existence. But he said, "No, that is not enough; the poor man does not know the circumstances, which must be explained to him pleasantly, and directions must be sent to my publishers to have a volume of my works forwarded to him." This was done, and his correspondent probably received both book and letter after the telegraph had announced to him that his unkind letter had been sent to a dying man.

Dr. Francis A. Howe, of Newburyport, a beloved personal friend, as well as skillful physician, was in daily attendance with Dr. Douglass, and Dr. Sarah Ellen Palmer, of Boston, remained in the house, rendering efficient service by her wise counsel and sympathy. From the first, he seemed fully aware of his critical condition, often assuring his friends of his entire resignation and his trust that all would be well. The day before his death he alluded feelingly to the kindness and tender care he had received, saying to his physicians and attendants, "You have done all that love and human skill could do; I thank you." Sometimes when his medicine was brought to him he would say, "It is of no use; I am worn out." He maintained the same patient, trustful, peaceful spirit that so beautifully marked his long and suffering illness the previous winter. "Love — love to all the world" and similar expressions were frequently on his lips. He had been subject to sleeplessness all his life, and usually with open eyes greeted the first signs of day. He had always preferred a sleeping-room in which he could watch from his bed the rising sun, and it had been his custom to raise the shades of his chamber windows that the early light might have no obstruction. On the morning before his death, when there seemed a prospect of his sleeping, the nurse quietly drew down the shades to darken the room; he observed this, and exclaiming, "No, no," made a quick, upward gesture, with the only hand which could obey the mastership it had owned so many years, and for the last time he enjoyed the mystery

of the brightening heavens. In the afternoon unfavorable symptoms increased, and he seemed at times unconscious, but when asked by his niece if he recognized her, he replied, "I have known thee all the time." These were his last audible words. He had been spared much acute pain, and seemed realizing what he had once written when alluding to a beloved friend who was suffering greatly with no hope of relief: "Happy are they to whom the solemn angel comes unannounced and quietly, and who are mercifully spared a long baptism of suffering." He lay through the night apparently in a quiet sleep, and with the dawn of another morning, and under the overshadowing of Infinite Peace, which was sweetly felt by all present, his pure spirit passed upward to the never-ending day. His poem "At Last" was recited in tearful voice by one of the little group of relatives at his bedside as the last moment of his life approached.

On the announcement of his death the flags upon the public buildings in Haverhill and Amesbury were placed at half mast, and the citizens were informed of the event by eighty-four strokes upon the bells. The Mayor of Haverhill, Thomas E. Burnham, issued the following proclamation: —

"With feelings of unfeigned sorrow the people of our city will receive the sad intelligence of the death at Hampton Falls, N. H., of Haverhill's most illustrious son, John Greenleaf Whittier. It would be idle at this time to attempt to recount his labors, or to describe his achievements. As a man of letters the world bears record of his fame. His genius was unexcelled. His purity of thought

and life, his compassion for the unfortunate, and his heart, that was ever open for his kind, stamp him as one who will receive the honor and homage of every nation and every tongue. But to us, the people of the city that gave him birth, there is a still tenderer tie. It was here that he spent his childhood, and received his early inspiration; here he wrought in the same industries by which we earn our daily bread. Our hills, our woods, our lakes, and our traditions furnished themes for his gifted pen. Nay, we have felt the strength of his citizenship and the warmth of his love, and it is with peculiar and heartfelt sorrow that we mourn for our own.

"In token of this sorrow, the house in which he was born will be appropriately draped in mourning; the flags upon the public buildings will remain at half mast until after the obsequies; the bells upon the city hall and churches will be tolled, and the city offices will be closed during the funeral hour; at that time the teachers in the public schools will lay aside all other duties, and cause appropriate mention to be made of his character and works, — that our citizens may give proper expression to the universal lament."

The citizens of Danvers, also, and other places manifested their sorrow by similar tokens of respect and affection.

On the afternoon of September 9, with the tolling of the village church bell, the people at Hampton Falls, who had known and loved him while there, came to pay their last tribute of affection, and his remains were borne away to the

Amesbury home, the church bells of Seabrook and Salisbury sending forth their mournful peals as the procession passed. The funeral services were held the next day. Thousands of people availed themselves of an opportunity to look upon the face of the poet, as the body lay in the little parlor, beneath the portraits of his mother and sister. Many came from neighboring cities and towns, and each railway train brought numbers of friends from a distance. The city government of Haverhill came in a body, and also the Whittier Club of Haverhill. Mr. Whittier had expressed in his will a desire that his funeral should be conducted in "the plain and quiet way of the Society of Friends," with which he was "connected by birthright as well as by settled conviction of the truth of its principles and the importance of its testimonies." The house being far too small to receive the large number of persons who were expected to be present, the services were held in the garden; and the day was most propitious for an out-door gathering. Seats for several hundreds were arranged around a myrtle-carpeted plat under the "garden room" windows, and other hundreds stood under the fruit trees in the rear. Boys clambered into the branches of the trees, and their bare feet, hanging over the heads of the assembled multitude, could not fail to suggest that it was the author of "The Barefoot Boy" to whose memory they were paying tribute.

Brief addresses were made by several ministers of the Society of Friends, and Judge Des Brisay of Nova Scotia, Rev. Dr. Fiske of Newburyport,

and Caroline H. Dall of Washington. The last speaker was Edmund Clarence Stedman, of New York, whose every word, uttered with deep feeling, had the weight of a trained artist's judgment, and glowed with the love of one poet soul for another. As a fitting conclusion of the impressive ceremony there arose the sweet voices of the Hutchinsons, who were endeared to Whittier by the friendship of many years, and by their active participation in his anti-slavery labors. They sang "Under the Clover" and "Close his eyes, his work is done."

Mr. Whittier's remains were interred in the village cemetery, in the section reserved for the Society of Friends. His lot is surrounded by a well-kept arbor vitæ hedge. At the corner where his brother is buried is a tall cedar, and at the foot of his own grave is another symmetrical tree of the same kind. Between him and his brother lie their father and mother, their two sisters, their aunt Mercy and uncle Moses. These comprise the whole family commemorated in the poem "Snow-Bound." Plain marble tablets, all exactly alike, mark these graves, and the poet's tombstone, afterward erected, is of the same simple pattern. The cemetery is upon an eminence overlooking the valley of the Powow in which nestles the thriving village of Amesbury; and the broad waters of the noble Merrimac, here a tidal stream, are close at hand, with the hills of old Newbury beyond. It is a spot midway between his birthplace and the place where he died, — a fit resting-place for him whose verse has celebrated every phase of the scenery it overlooks. Hither

for all time will come those who love the memory and admire the genius of the prophet of freedom, the poet of New England life.

Mr. Whittier died at the early dawn of a lovely September day; it was at the close of a day equally perfect that his casket was lowered to a bed of roses in a grave lined with ferns and golden-rod.

The tribute of Dr. Holmes to the memory of his friend may here be appropriately given: —

"Thou, too, hast left us. While with heads bowed low,
And sorrowing hearts, we mourned our summer's dead,
The flying season bent its Parthian bow,
And yet again our mingling tears were shed.

"Was Heaven impatient that it could not wait
The blasts of winter for earth's fruits to fall?
Were angels crowding round the open gate
To greet the spirits coming at their call?

"Nay, let not fancies, born of old beliefs,
Play with the heart-beats that are throbbing still,
And waste their outworn phrases on the griefs,
The silent griefs, that words can only chill.

"For thee, dear friend, there needs no high-wrought lay,
To shed its aureole round thy cherished name, —
Thou whose plain, home-born speech of *Yea* and *Nay*
Thy truthful nature ever best became.

"Death reaches not a spirit such as thine, —
It can but steal the robe that hid thy wings;
Though thy warm breathing presence we resign,
Still in our hearts its loving semblance clings.

"Peaceful thy message, yet for struggling right, —
When Slavery's gauntlet in our face was flung, —
While timid weaklings watched the dubious fight,
No herald's challenge more defiant rung.

"Yet was thy spirit tuned to gentle themes
Sought in the haunts thy humble youth had known.
Our stern New England's hills and vales and streams, —
Thy tuneful idyls made them all their own.

"The wild flowers springing from thy native sod
Lent all their charms thy new-world song to fill, —
Gave thee the mayflower and the golden-rod
To match the daisy and the daffodil.

"In the brave records of our earlier time
A hero's deed thy generous soul inspired,
And many a legend, told in ringing rhyme,
The youthful soul with high resolve has fired.

"Not thine to lean on priesthood's broken reed;
No barriers caged thee in a bigot's fold;
Did zealots ask to syllable thy creed,
Thou saidst, 'Our Father,' and thy creed was told.

"Best loved and saintliest of our singing train,
Earth's noblest tributes to thy name belong.
A lifelong record closed without a stain,
A blameless memory shrined in deathless song.

"Lift from its quarried ledge a flawless stone;
Smooth the green turf, and bid the tablet rise,
And on its snow-white surface carve alone
These words, — he needs no more, — *Here Whittier lies.*"

APPENDIX.

A. "THE KING'S MISSIVE."

In reply to a paper read before the Massachusetts Historical Society by Rev. Dr. George E. Ellis, criticising the historical accuracy of his ballad with the above title, Mr. Whittier sent this letter to the Boston "Advertiser" in March, 1881: —

A friend has called my attention to a paper read by Dr. Ellis before the Massachusetts Historical Society, upon the persecution of the Friends in New England of the seventeenth century, in which my poetic version of an incident of that period, the "King's Missive" to Governor Endicott, is criticised. It is not easy in a poem of the kind referred to to be strictly accurate in every detail, but I think the ballad has preserved with tolerable correctness the spirit, tone, and color of the incident and its time. At least such was my intention. Certainly, I did not profess to hold up that reprobate monarch, Charles II., as a consistent friend of toleration, or of any other Christian virtue. The Quakers of his time knew him too well to attribute his actions to any other than selfish motives. They were never deceived by his professions of liberality, as Baxter and his friend, "old Mr. Ash," were, when they wept for very joy over his gracious words and promises. They sought to obtain from him some relief from their sufferings, and did so in a few instances when it suited his caprice, or when the persecutors complained of happened to be Puritans.

The letter of the king commanded that further proceedings against the imprisoned Friends should be stayed, and that they should be sent to England for trial. To this Governor

Endicott promised implicit obedience. The prisoners were released from the jail, and they and their friends outside were for the first time permitted to meet together in Boston, and praise God for their deliverance. That the persecution did not cease is true. But ever after the hunted Quakers breathed more freely, and felt that the end of their long night of tribulation was near. That the prisoners were not sent to England was probably due to the fears of the governor and his advisers that their doings would not bear a legal investigation. The only way of evading the king's requisition was to have no prisoners in the jail. "Drake's History of Boston," page 357, says, "An order was issued for the discharge of the Quakers then in prison. William Salter was the prison-keeper. There were, a little previous to this, twenty-eight persons lying in Boston jail, one of whom, Wenlock Christison, was under sentence of death."

In Bryant and Gay's "History of the United States," vol. ii., page 197, it is stated that "William Salter, keeper of Boston jail, was at once ordered to release and discharge all the Quakers in his custody." In the journal of George Fox it is said, in relation to this matter, that "the passengers in the ship and the Friends in the town met together, and offered up praise and thanksgiving to God, who had so wonderfully delivered them out of the teeth of the devourer;" and that, while they were thus met, "in came a poor Friend, who, being sentenced by their bloody law to die, had lain some time in irons, expecting execution." Dr. Evans, in his carefully compiled "History of Friends in the Seventeenth Century," says, "The council issued an order to the keeper of the prison to set at liberty all the Quakers then in confinement." (Page 250.)

I think it will be seen that there *was* a "general jail delivery" in consequence of the king's demand; that the Friends met together and thanked God for their deliverance, and that "one appointed to die," and who had lain in irons expecting death, was with them. It has been said that Wenlock Christison was released before Shattuck's arrival, in consequence of his "recantation." He recanted nothing. He stated only that he found a freedom in his mind to depart

out of the jurisdiction, and that he did not know as he should ever come back. Mary Dyer left the colony under the same circumstances, and after a time felt herself called upon to return. It seems more than probable that Christison was not set at liberty until after the arrival of the king's message, for he would not have been permitted to remain in Boston one hour after liberation, and it appears that he was with the little company who met together in praise and thanksgiving.

It is true, and for the credit of human nature it should be stated, that the cruel enactments for whipping, branding, selling into slavery, and death on the gallows were distasteful to a considerable minority of the people of New England. Governor Winthrop of Connecticut remonstrated against the course of the Massachusetts authorities, as did also Saltonstall and Pike among the magistrates of the colony. But there is no evidence that the clergy, who were the instigators of these laws, faltered for a moment in their determination to enforce them, so far as their influence could be exerted upon the magistracy. Endicott, Bellingham, and Bradstreet needed no stimulus from them. There is not the slightest evidence that these men had abated one jot or tittle of their fixed determination to crush out and exterminate every germ of Quakerism. Nor can it be said that the persecution grew out of the "intrusion," "indecency," and "effrontery" of the persecuted.

It owed its origin to the settled purpose of the ministers and leading men of the colony to permit no difference of opinion on religious matters. They had banished the Baptists, and whipped at least one of them. They had hunted down Gorton and his adherents; they had imprisoned Dr. Child, an Episcopalian, for petitioning the General Court for toleration. They had driven some of their best citizens out of their jurisdiction, with Anne Hutchinson, and the gifted minister, Wheelwright. Any dissent on the part of their own fellow-citizens was punished as severely as the heresy of strangers.

The charge of "indecency" comes with ill grace from the authorities of the Massachusetts Colony. The first Quakers

who arrived in Boston, Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, were arrested on board the ship before landing, their books taken from them and burned by the constable, and they themselves brought before Deputy-Governor Bellingham, in the absence of Endicott. This astute magistrate ordered them to be stripped naked, and their bodies to be carefully examined, to see if there was not the Devil's mark on them as witches. They were then sent to the jail, their cell window was boarded up, and they were left without food or light, until the master of the vessel that brought them was ordered to take them to Barbadoes. When Endicott returned, he thought they had been treated too leniently, and declared that he would have had them whipped.

After this, almost every town in the province was favored with the spectacle of aged and young women stripped to the middle, tied to a cart-tail and dragged through the streets and scourged without mercy by the constable's whip. It is not strange that these atrocious proceedings, in two or three instances, unsettled the minds of the victims. Lydia Wardwell of Hampton, who, with her husband, had been reduced to almost total destitution by persecution, was summoned by the church of which she had been a member to appear before it to answer to the charge of non-attendance. She obeyed the call by appearing in the unclothed condition of the sufferers whom she had seen under the constable's whip. For this she was taken to Ipswich and stripped to the waist, tied to a rough post, which tore her bosom as she writhed under the lash, and severely scourged to the satisfaction of a crowd of lookers-on at the tavern. One, and only one, other instance is adduced in the person of Deborah Wilson of Salem. She had seen her friends and neighbors scourged naked through the street, among them her brother, who was banished on pain of death. She, like all Puritans, had been educated in the belief of the plenary inspiration of Scripture, and had brooded over the strange "signs" and testimonies of the Hebrew prophets. It seemed to her that the time had arrived for some similar demonstration, and that it was her duty to walk abroad in the disrobed condition to which her friends had been subjected, as a sign and warning to the

persecutors. Whatever of "indecency" there was in these cases was directly chargeable upon the atrocious persecution. At the door of the magistrates and ministers of Massachusetts must be laid the insanity of the conduct of these unfortunate women.

But Boston, at least, had no voluntary Godivas. The only disrobed women in its streets were made so by Puritan sheriffs and constables, who dragged them amidst jeering crowds at the cart-tail, stripped for the lash, which in one instance laid open with a ghastly gash the bosom of a young mother!

It is a remarkable proof of the purity of life among the early Friends that their enemies, while exhausting the language of abuse against them, pointed to no instances of licentiousness or immoral practice. However enthusiastic or extravagant, they "kept themselves unspotted from the world." Woman, from the Quaker standpoint, was regarded as man's equal and beloved companion, like him directly responsible to God, and free to obey the leadings of the Spirit of Truth. From the rise of the society to the present time the peace, purity, and peculiar sweetness of Quaker homes have been proverbial.

The charge that the Quakers who suffered were "vagabonds," and "ignorant, low fanatics," is unfounded in fact. Mary Dyer, who was executed, was a woman of marked respectability. She had been the friend and associate of Sir Henry Vane and the ministers Wheelwright and Cotton. The papers left behind by the three men who were hanged show that they were above the common class of their day in mental power and genuine piety. John Rous, who in execution of his sentence had his right ear cut off by the constable in the Boston jail, was of gentlemanly lineage, the son of Colonel Rous of the British army, and himself the betrothed of a high-born and cultivated young English lady. Nicholas Upsall was one of Boston's most worthy and substantial citizens, yet was driven in his age and infirmities, from his home and property, into the wilderness.

If the authorities were more severe in dealing with the Quakers than with other dissenters, it was because they

were more persistent in maintaining their rights of opinion. The persecutors were, on the whole, impartial in their intolerance. The same whip that scored the back of Holmes, the Baptist, fell on that of Wharton, the Quaker. The same decree of banishment was issued against Mary Dyer and Anne Hutchinson. The same jail door that was shut upon the twelve-year-old Quaker girl was closed also upon the learned and world-traveled Dr. Child, the Episcopalian.

The Friends have been accused of running upon the sword of the law held out against them, of glorying in persecution. This charge was urged against the early Christians. It was said of the martyr Ignatius, on his way to Rome, that he longed to come to the beasts that were to devour him; that he would invite them to tear him; nay, should they refuse to do so, he would force them. The good Emperor Marcus Antoninus expressed his dislike of the Christian sect, because of their "obstinacy in seeking death." It must be owned that the persecuted Quakers were more afraid of violating conscience than unrighteous law. They held duty paramount to any other consideration. They could die, but they could not deny the truth. To such "obstinacy" the world is largely indebted. The religious freedom of our age is the legacy of the heroic confessors, who suffered and died rather than yield their honest convictions. It was Quaker "obstinacy" and sturdy endurance which opened the jails of England, crowded with Presbyterians and Independents, among them the great names of Baxter and Bunyan. Baxter, who hated them with all the intensity of his nature, owns that the Quakers, by their perseverance in holding their religious meetings in defiance of penal laws and brutal mobs, took upon themselves the burden of persecution, which would otherwise have fallen on himself and his Presbyterian friends; and especially mentions with commendation the noble and successful plea of William Penn before the Recorder's Court of London, based on the fundamental liberties of Englishmen secured by the Great Charter.

The inheritors of the name and religious opinions of the suffering Friends of New England have no wish to deprive

the Puritan authorities of any proper extenuation or palliation of their severity. But in truth there is but one excuse for them — the hard and cruel spirit of the age in which they lived. They shared its common intolerance. With the single exception of the Friends, every sect in Christendom believed in the right of the magistrate to punish heresy. There were indeed individuals, and among the noblest of the age, who sympathized with the persecuted Friends, and exerted themselves for their relief — such men as Sydney and Vane, Milton and Marvel, Tillotson and Locke, Prince Rupert and Lord Herbert. But these were solitary exceptions.

For myself, I have always cheerfully admitted to its full extent this plea of universal intolerance, in extenuation of the New England ministers and magistrates. I do not doubt that they regarded the Quaker doctrine of the Divine Immanence as a fatal heresy. They could bring no charge of immorality against the men and women whom they whipped and hanged. They could not charge them with taking up arms in rebellion, or countenancing in any way a forcible resistance to even unjust law. They could not deny that when left unmolested they were industrious and temperate, peaceable and kind neighbors and citizens.

The tendency of Quakerism to promote peace, good order, and worldly prosperity was proved by the fact that three of the colonies, Rhode Island, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, under the Quaker governors, Coddington, Archdale, and Penn, were exceptional examples of peace, order, and progress.

Dr. Ellis has been a very generous, as well as ingenious defender of the Puritan clergy and government, and his labors in this respect have the merit of gratuitous disinterestedness. Had the very worthy and learned gentleman been a resident in the Massachusetts colony in 1660, one of his most guarded doctrinal sermons would have brought down upon him the wrath of clergy and magistracy. His Socinianism would have seemed more wicked than the "inward light" of the Quakers; and, had he been as "doggedly obstinate" as Servetus at Geneva (as I do him the

justice to think he would have been), he might have hung on the same gallows with the Quakers, or the same shears which clipped the ears of Holder, Rous, and Copeland might have shorn off his own.

I can assure him that in speaking on this subject I have always honestly endeavored to do justice to both parties. In the ballad to which he refers I think I have done so. In "Margaret Smith's Diary" I have gone to the extreme in finding excuse for John Norton himself. I find no fault with Dr. Ellis's championship of Endicott and his advisers. I only regret that, in attempting to vindicate them, he has done injustice to the sufferers, who he seems to think were at least quite as much to blame for being hanged as Endicott was for hanging them. We who inherit the faith and name of these noble men and women, who gave up home and life for freedom of worship, have no desire to be complimented at their expense. Holding their doctrine and reverencing their memories, we look back awed and humbled upon their heroic devotion to apprehended duty, and with gratitude to God for their example of obedience unto death.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

AMESBURY, 3*d mo.*, 22, 1881.

To this reply Dr. Ellis made a rejoinder in which he says that the missive of the king only suspended until the next court, but did not alter, the laws and proceedings of the magistrates, which they put in force afterwards "in all respects," save only as they limited to three the number of the towns through which a vagabond Quaker was to be whipped in getting him out of the jurisdiction; and the king wrote another letter the next year, in which he says he is not to be understood as wishing any indulgence to those persons commonly called Quakers. "We have found it necessary here to make a sharp law against them, and are well contented that you do the like there." This sentence occurs in the rejoinder: —

"He [Mr. Whittier] says that I seem to think that the Quakers were as much to blame for being hanged as Endicott was for hanging them. I might not put the matter in that way, but the most candid and deliberate judgment I can form on the sad episode is, that both parties were equally chargeable with wrong and folly."

Mr. Whittier continued the discussion, and concluded it, so far as he was concerned, with the following letter:

I find in the "Advertiser" of this morning a rejoinder from Dr. Ellis to my communication of the 28th instant. I do not know that any further remarks on my part are really necessary, but I would like to notice briefly one or two points. Dr. Ellis reiterates his belief that no prisoners were released in consequence of the "King's Missive." If he is right in his opinion that there were no Friends in the jail at the time, the reply of Governor Endicott to the king's messenger, Shattuck, would have been prompt and decisive that His Majesty had been misinformed, as there were no such persons condemned or imprisoned in the colony. Instead of this, he consulted his deputy and assured Shattuck that the king's command should be obeyed.

In answer to my suggestion that the imprisoned Friends were not sent to England for trial agreeably to the king's demand, from a fear that the action of the colonial magistrates would not bear a legal investigation, Dr. Ellis states that a year previous certain prisoners were released on condition of their departure in an English ship. The cases are not parallel. The people thus sent off had no means of bringing their cause before a British court, and the Massachusetts authorities well knew there was no danger of their enactments and penalties being tested by English law. But the king's letter to Endicott is an imperative demand: "If there be any of those people called Quakers amongst you already condemned to suffer death or *other corporal punishment*, or that are imprisoned and obnoxious to such condemnation, you are to forbear to proceed any further therein; and that

you forthwith send the said persons, *whether condemned or imprisoned, over unto this our kingdom with the respective crimes or offenses laid to their charge*, to the end that such course may be taken with them here as shall be agreeable to our laws and their demerits." A literal compliance with this demand would have led to a full disclosure before English tribunals of the cruel and unwarranted proceedings of the colonial government. Hence the only safe course for the governor and his advisers was to liberate all the Friends who were in confinement, and then declare there were no such persons as the missive designated in the jail at Boston.

If, as Dr. Ellis avers, the king's letter had no effect of releasing prisoners or staying for the time, at least, the severity of the persecution, the two delegates of the colony sent to England in consequence of that letter must have been guilty of falsehood. Simon Bradstreet positively stated that *there was no longer any persecution in New England*, and John Norton confirmed it. It is true they made the statement under some fear that the father of Robinson, one of the persons executed, might hold them accountable as parties to his son's murder. George Fox in his journal says that "some of the old Royalists were earnest with Friends to have prosecuted them, but we told them we left them to the Lord, to whom vengeance belonged."

Dr. Ellis seems to find in the incivility and strong language of the early Friends an excuse for the severity of the laws against them. The language of controversy in that day was not remarkable for courtesy and delicacy, and I admit that the speech of the hunted and outlawed Quakers had a good deal of the old Saxon energy. Something should be pardoned in them, however, when their opponents' lack of argument was supplemented by halter and whipping-post. In point of fact, in decorous language and Christian charity towards those who differed from them, the Quakers of that day were quite as exemplary as the magistrates and ministers who persecuted them. It was a coarse, hard age, in which nobody was mealy-mouthed. The Puritan himself was scarcely the modern ideal of a saint. We can imagine how he seemed to his Rhode Island, Dutch, and Acadian

neighbors. There is abundant evidence, too, that his Zion had internal troubles of its own, with the bitterness of which such "outside barbarians" as Quakers and Baptists "intermedelled not." Any one who reads the careful study of a Puritan neighborhood in the first volume of Upham's "History of Salem Witchcraft" may see how strife, envyings, covetousness, and bitter family feuds rankled beneath the outward show of church fellowship. Cotton Mather's testimony in this respect is noteworthy.

He tells us that "the rebuilding or removing of meeting-houses has tempted neighbors from lifting pure hands without wrath in those houses; inclosing of commons hath made neighbors that should have been as sheep to bite and devour one another; disposal of little matters in the militia has made people almost ready to fall on one another with force of arms; little piques between leading men in a town have misled all the neighbors far and near into most unaccountable party-making." He tells also of "inordinate passions, sinful hearts and hatreds among church members themselves, who abound with evil surmisings, uncharitable and unrighteous censure, back-bitings and tale hearing and telling." Surely it would seem that in such a community a slight infusion of Quakerism could not do much harm.

But enough of this. A son of New England, proud of her history, I take no pleasure in dwelling on the sad and tragic story of the Quaker persecution. Of all that is true and noble in the character of the Puritans, there is no warmer admirer than myself. But for the sake of vindicating them from the charge of that intolerance which they shared with nearly all Christendom, I cannot undertake to justify or excuse persecution by vilifying its victims. As heartily as my friend Dr. Ellis I love Boston, — the city of the Pilgrims, — the tokens and monuments of its historic renown, — Faneuil Hall, the Old South, all its memorable places and associations; and, if he cannot sympathize with, he will at least respect, the feeling of reverence with which I regard even its beautiful Common, knowing that hidden somewhere under its green turf are the graves of the Quaker martyrs.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

B. PRESERVATION OF WHITTIER HOMESTEADS.

Soon after the death of Mr. Whittier, the late Hon. James H. Carleton purchased the homestead at East Haverhill, and transferred it to a board of trustees, composed of members of the Whittier Club of Haverhill. In the deed of gift, Mr. Carleton expressed the wish that the natural features of the landscape might be preserved, the buildings restored as nearly as possible to their original condition, and access to them given to the public, "that thereby the memory of and love for the poet and the man may be cherished and perpetuated." Mr. Alfred A. Ordway was named as president of the board of trustees, and he has taken charge of the restoration of the house and grounds, his aim being to bring the estate into a condition as nearly as possible resembling that of eighty years ago. He has found and restored to their old places many of the articles of furniture which were in the house in Whittier's youth. The house is now open to the public on certain days of each week, and thousands of visitors make pilgrimage to the scene of "Snow-Bound," an electric railway which passes the spot making it easy of access.

Mr. Whittier's Amesbury home is to be kept by his niece as a memorial of his long residence in that village, the house and grounds to remain substantially as he left them. The little "garden room" which he used as a study, and in which he received his friends and guests, will retain its books and pictures in the places he assigned them. The portraits of his mother and sister will remain in the parlor. In this house, also, is preserved the desk upon which "Snow-Bound" and most of the poems and letters of his middle life were written.

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